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THE STORY OF SWAMI RAMA

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE SISTERS OF THE SPINNING WHEEL
(AND OTHER SIKH POEMS—ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED).
INTRODUCTION by Ernest Rhys
Crown 8vo. Price 6s. nett or Rs. 6.

THE UNSTRUNG BEADS, Rs. 5.

AT HIS FEET, As. 6.

AN AFTERNOON WITH SELF, As. 4.

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Swami Rama in America

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THE STORY OF SWAMI RAMA

78.

THE POET MONK OF THE PUNJAB

20
23.3.97

BY

PURAN SINGH

The lights shone down the street
In the long blue close of day;
A boy's heart beat sweet, sweet,
As it flowered in its dreamy clay.

Beyond the dazzling throng
And above the towers of men
The stars made him long, long,
To return to their lights again.

They lit the wondrous years
And his heart within was gay;
But a life of tears, tears,
He had won for himself that day.

A. E.

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1924

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To

All Intoxicated with

The Joys of Self-Realisation

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My thanks are due to R. S. Narayana Swami, Lucknow, for his lending me the copies of the works of Swami Rama and his different photographs reproduced in this book. The cuttings from the American press which Swami Narayana had so carefully preserved are now reproduced to bring in clear relief the scheme that Swami Rama had then evolved in America for the emancipation of India from "Caste" which is now popularly known as "untouchability".

I take this opportunity of thanking the friends who kindly looked through the proofs.

PURAN SINGH

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FOREWORD

WHAT can be the materials for the biography of a man who was silent on the secret of his joyous life like a lotus that springs up from its humble hidden birth-place, and bursts forth into the glory of its own blossom? And what can be his biography but that whoever happened to see him, a flower amongst men, stood for a while, looking at him, and having looked at him full, went past him, deeply suspecting the existence of golden lands beyond this physical life, whose mystic glimpses shone on his smiling face. This full blown lotus refused to give any further details of the story of his life, though much to the agitation of many a soul, he kept on flaunting the perfume of his soul in air.

Swami Rama was essentially an apostle of the life of the spirit, whose daily food was the Simrin of the name of God—Om. All who knew him saw that he was one who had lost himself in the Lord. His repetition of this spiritual Mantram sounded like a river of song flowing out of him. It is written that this Simrin is assuredly a sign of inspiration; it is God's favour. Swami Rama had completely disentangled himself from the meshes of the world-net and soared like a bird in the higher skies.

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A rough pencil-sketch of this inspired personality with whom I first came in contact at Tokyo is given in the following pages in the form of impressions, as it is evidently impossible to trace an authentic history of the development of his mind and his secret love-making with Krishna, God.

It was quite natural for him to rise to the heights of love and call to himself all so feelingly—"I am He," "I am God". But this call in his case was more devotional than philosophical. The stormy passion of Swami Rama, his tears of ecstasy, his poetic joys with beauty, his lyrical realisation of unity with the people who came around him, his broad human sympathy,—were all quite different from the dry, academic, wooden, unmoving, rigid indifference of a Vedantic philosopher; his little heart beat in harmony with the rhythm of life itself and the sorrow and joy alike of humanity were his own.

One who would look more closely into his writings would find that the term "Vedanta" as used by Swami Rama has a meaning different from what is generally given to it; it is more or less his own devotion to Krishna or God-Self, blazing up into songs of pantheistic colour. The spirit of his Vedanta, however, was fed by the spirit of the Punjab of Guru Gobind Singh, and further strengthened by the songs of self-affirmation of the adepts like Shams Tabrez and other Persian Masters. All that contributed to the continuous burning of the inner flame of his divine life, he made his own. He used the literature

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of the whole world—East and West—for winning the inner freedom for himself. His "Aliph," an Urdu periodical that he issued from Lahore, was the chief vehicle of his rhapsodic writings in which he set in his gem-like collections from Persian, Punjabee, English and Sanskrit literatures. It is the characteristic symbol of his all-embracing mind, his keen feeling of oneness with the past and the future.

He sinks his sentences into tears. He drowns his thoughts in ecstatic cries. He disarms criticism by tenderly diffusing himself into the being of his critic. He wins his enemies by a song of love in which he calls him *his own self*. He enchants the very air around himself with his bird-like speech that was all poetry, all music. His body was a lake which trembled seeing the Sun enter into its depths. He confounds logic by his divine madness. He contradicts himself in a thousand ways in his self-intoxication which alone is both his creed and religion.

His overstrung emphasis on the idea—"I am God" —at times jars on one's ears, introduced as it is so abruptly into a charming atmosphere of love-making with gods. In one sentence he asks us to love God, and in the next he suddenly throws out the effigy of "God" from the idol-worshippers' temple and sets himself in God's place. It is difficult to follow him, for one needs the madness of his joy, his glowing passion and his inspiration to rise above all imperfections of all such expressions of the Inexpressible.

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He is concerned with the joy of it all, with being God and with nothing else. No doubt, this man tried to give the secret of his success, but whatever he wished to say was blown away like a dry autumn leaf in the tempest of his own bosom and he ended in screams and cries! A truly eloquent apostle of the Life of the Spirit! He pitched himself against the half-life of disbelief and fear. He said "I see fractions of men, not men. I wish men were whole. Wholeness is holiness."

As a student he worked against stupendous odds with the will of a conqueror, with the devotion of a *satee*—woman and with the labour of a galley-slave. Though hungry he would rather deny himself an extra loaf of bread and buy instead more oil for his midnight lamp. And for years, his hunger for knowledge was divine.

As a poet he ran wild and naked with the joy of his feelings as he saw them welling up, swallowing in silence the glory of the pure. He would bare his body and lie senseless in the open for hours to be bathed by the Sun, to be wiped by the winds. He lived with the poetic spirit of Nature, and he was on terms of great intimacy with her. He would not sit to shape his gold or set his gems or polish his rubies into any complex work of art. It seems, his thought and feelings in their original shape and colour, had in them the perfection of soul. Never mind the outward forms! His art was simple; it concerned itself with the creation of joy within himself and in others. With Hafiz and Omar Khayam he sat in the Sacred Tavern

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of his brother-mystics drinking cups of wine one after another. Tipsy and self-oblivious he went searching for God everywhere!

On his return from America, he tried to see things somewhat in the new-learnt fashion of that country, chiselling his sentences and speeches, improving the mechanics of his language and thought, thereby virtually modifying his inspiration. The bliss of soul rises always like a sea, in its tempest all mechanical calculations are confounded. His main theme was the actual creation of joy for himself and for distribution. Alas, if he took to writing essays! One would have loved to see the Swami as he glowed supreme in his own inner joy rising above both man and nature; to see such a man doing something mechanical is nothing short of the disaster of an extraordinary personality that one rarely sees in men like Swami Rama. But these are the temptations of the world. His address "Secret of Success" reproduced in this book has in its naïve simplicity a divine correspondence with the exaltation of his mind as he first descended from the glaciers of the Himalayas to the plains at Lucknow, while his "Law of Crucifixion" (written after his return from America) has in it the odour of the sublime depression that comes to people like him when they overspend themselves in distributing the inner joy. Alas! the Swami had spent away the power in preaching his "Vedanta" to the people of the lowlands. In the purity of his joy there was no room for the sadness of self-crucifixion!

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Some of his selections from the literatures of the East and the West as in "Aliph" and of his letters to one Dhanna Mal of Gujranwala, a guide and friend of his when he was yet in his teens, and other notes left by him are at places given in extenso as the best autobiographical notes of such as he. His true biography is in his actions on the mental plane.

His letters throw a flood of light on the hopes and aspirations of the Punjabi students in those times. Also, a side-light leads one to the blind end of the stone wall which usually meets the Indian graduates after they leave their college. How difficult indeed must it have been for others (and it is still so) when a brilliant graduate like Swami Rama had to be driven from pillar to post for a job in those days when the Universities were not half so busy as now in minting a certain brand of graduates! To rise to an Extra Assistant Commissionership, a low, stupid Government post, was the height of the ambition of the Punjabi young man then, and is perhaps the same even now. But we find Swami Rama so loved his pet subject—Mathematics—that even at the invitation of his Professors he could not forego the profession of a teacher and a missionary for the mere shadows of the false dignity of Government service. This fervent spirit of teaching what he had learnt is remarkable and it exhibited itself involuntarily throughout his meteoric career.

His singular devotion to this little Dhanna of Gujranwala who did, in some measure, help him when he was a student in the High School, shows

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the great disciple that was in him. Unruffled, unvexed under various physical and mental strains, self-sacrifice is his one solution for every difficulty. To think of God and to meet Him in everything and in every man is his faith and worship.

We see his extraordinary fondness of solitude and hard incessant work. And how disappointing in those days, to him, was the empty-hearted show of welcome on the part of the meaningless crowds of Lahore, who vied with each other in honouring Dada Bhai Naoroji! And how senseless sounded the jingle of political orations of the denationalized congress-men of those days to this humble boy of Lahore clad in simple *khaddar*. And living on a few annas a day, sometimes on only one anna a day!

Swami Rama educated himself into a free man, while all others here in this country go the way of slavery. The colleges in India are breeding houses for slaves whose ambition of Government service ends in the unavoidable national vice of being slaves. Here was a young Punjabi, a free man, who was welcomed and honoured in Japan and America, wherever he went, as an equal brother of all. Every-where thousands listened to him with a respect worthy of a living sage of ancient India. He is one of those few rare Indians who have worked and served to raise the ideals of their race in the estimation of the world of to-day. He struck Prof-essor Taka Kussu of Tokio as a True Indian Yogi who explained both Buddhism and Vedanta in his person. He struck Professor James of America as

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a spiritual genius who lived in a centre outside of his body.

In this idle country where the mind is not at rest, where the hands are not at incessant work, where religion is superstition, where religious practice is barren ritual, where racial pride dwells still in self-flattery of a spiritual glory that belonged to its ancestors long dead, where the mind indolently thinks more of the past than of the future, Swami Rama comes next to Swami Vivekananda in reminding the people of India to rise from empty idle dreams and take to incessant work to win the freedom which is the fruit not of conquest over others but over one's self.

Gwalior, C.I.
May, 1924.

PURAN SINGH

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CHAPTER I

THE MONK HIMSELF

WE all met him first as a monk, and it is best to present him as a monk, before one proceeds more intimately with the story of his early life. Enough here to say that, born in 1873, he turned a monk in 1901, he left for Japan and America in 1902, returned in 1905 and died in 1906, at the early age of thirty-three.

When he reached San Francisco, the local newspapers recorded, as below, the very first impressions he made on the people there; he had gone there fresh from the Himalayas, clad in his orange robe, a symbol of the divine fire that glowed within him.

> The old order of things is to be reversed. Out of the jungles of Upper India has come a man of astonishing wisdom, a prophet, philosopher, a scientist and priest, who proposes to play the rôle of missionary in the United States, and preach a new doctrine of unselfishness and spiritual power to the idolatrous worshippers of the mighty dollar. He is a Brahmin of the Brahmins, a Goswami of the highest caste, and he is known among his brothers as Swami Rama.
>
> This remarkable sage of the Himalayas is a slender, intellectual young man, with the ascetic mould of a priest and the light complexion of a high-caste

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Brahmin. His forehead is broad and high, his head splendidly developed, his nose thin and delicate as a woman's. A wide, kindly, almost tender mouth parts freely over dazzlingly white perfect teeth in a smile that seems to light up all surrounding space and wins the instantaneous confidence and good-will of all who come within the circle of the radiance. "How do I live?" he said yesterday. "That is simple. I do not try. I believe. I attune my soul to the harmony of love for all men. That makes all men to love me, and where love is, there is no want, no suffering. This state of mind and faith bring influence to me that supplies my needs without the asking. If I am hungry, there is always someone to feed me. I am forbidden to receive money or to ask for anything. Yet I have everything, and more than most, for I live largely in a world that few can attain."

Under the heading, "A Hindu Evangelist," a Portland paper wrote:

Small, slight, with dark eager bright eyes, and olive skin, attired in a black suit, wearing at all times a brilliant red turban, this is Swami Rama. This is *the* man from India now in Portland. Not *a* man from India

Men from India not infrequently reach this Port. But seldom if ever has any of such learning, such broad human sympathies, such unselfish motives arrived here.

Before he had gone to Japan and America, he presided twice at a miniature kind of Parliament of Religions in India organised by Swami Shiv Guna Acharya at the Shanti Ashram, Muthra, and the impression recorded then by "The Freethinker" of Lahore runs as follows:

. . . Every man's man, thoughtful and serious, lively and severe by turns, keeping the whole audience composed of heterogeneous shades of opinions spellbound, as it were, for hours together, until late in the evening. He is a quiet, modest, unassuming

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young man, in the heyday of youth, well versed in ancient and modern philosophy as well as in modern sciences, and is withal made of a stuff of which persons of honest convictions ought to be made. Gentle and amicable, childlike, innocent in manners and behaviour, he yet has the iron hand inside the silken glove, for while scrupulously regardful of the feelings of others, he is far more outspoken in expressing his opinions . . . The effect of his presence was marvellous, his joy was infectious, his ideas still more so, and above all his recitation of OM. Every religious seeker who came to him, began reciting OM. To see him was to begin, as it were, one's life anew. All meanness and smallness of mind vanished, and the man was lifted up. A new, an altogether transcendental outlook on life, flew, as it were, from his eyes to the eyes of those who came under the spell of his happiness and dream.

He was gay like a wild bird. He leapt like a fawn; never, so to say, was he seen walking with the slow and tardy pace of the common man. When his secretary, I believe Miss Taylor, took him to the Manager of the Great Pacific Railroad Company, San Francisco, to get his tickets on concession rates to New York, the Manager said: "Him? to him I offer the Pullman car free. His smiles are so irresistible."

When I took him to the house of Baron Naibo Kando in Tokyo, the latter, in the middle of the conversation, got up and went in and brought his wife and children, and apologisingly said: "Excuse me! I could not have this unusual joy without sharing it with my wife and children." When

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Naibo Kando asked him "Why did you renounce your family?" Swami Rama replied: "Only to seek a larger one and share my joy with the whole world." At the large gathering of the Religious League at St. Louis Exhibition, the local newspapers wrote that the only bright spot in the gathering was Swami Rama. He would laugh and laugh for minutes together in his informal talks, in reply to some philosophical and theological questions, and say nothing in reply, as if saying that this beaming, bubbling personality was enough reply to all the pretentious enquiries about man and God.

I had the pleasure of taking him to Mr. (now Dr.) Khudadad, a graduate of the Punjab University at Hardwar, and as I introduced him to the Swami, the latter said: "Why bring such people to me? They are already formed in the fashion of Rama. Rama has nothing to teach them," and the Swami filled the interview with his brilliant smiles.

He said: "Rama does not understand your name. *Khuda* (God), *Dad* (Given), it ought to have been only *Khuda*, God. Dr. Khudadad replied: "For those who have eyes this, for others that." This reply delighted him immensely. After months, when I met Dr. Khudadad again, he had condensed the Swami's whole life in an Urdu couplet of his composition:

> O Swami Rama! How mysterious is thy smile,
> The secret of life is manifest therein.

His joy played with words, as a child plays with toys.

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For example, note his play with his own name. At Tokyo, he said to me when I failed to catch his third-person description of himself as "Rama": "Look here, just as the order of life is changed, from a householder to a monk, from the world to God, so the order of names of this body (meaning himself) is reversed. In pre-monk days, it was *Tirath Rama* now it is *Rama Tirath*." Later on, he deleted playfully the little 'i' out of the last word, and began signing himself as "Rama Truth". He gave his whole thought to mental healing, when he said "Disease is only *dis-ease*". Be *at ease* with your God, with your self and be *whole*, *holy*, and you cannot have any *dis-ease.* He changed *atonement* and always wrote and pronounced it as *at-one-ment.* He said *understanding* is *standing under*, diving deep into your own Real Self. He played with his title *Swami.* It is a Sanskrit word meaning 'Lord' and carries in it the sense of superiority over others. He spelt and pronounced Swami as *So-am-I.* He would write a letter and subscribe himself thus:

So-am-I
Rama Truth.

He played similarly with his *Mantram*, his continuous chant, the natural warble of this free bird. *OM*, he would say, is *O'am*; *O* is the Persian word which means *He, M* stands for *I am—He I am* or "I am God".

He once said that God is neither *Mr.* nor *Mrs.* nor *Miss* but *mystery.* He did not like the hard

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sound of 'H' in the word *Hindu*, he always pronounced it as *Indu*—Moon.

"Matlab," an Urdu word, is a great word he said. It means "*object to be attained*"—and it also means *Mat—do not*, *lab—seek*, *Matlab* is, *do not seek*.

He saw in the Moslem festival of *Id*, after the Ramzan, their fast month, the great joy of the God-consciousness of the Prophet. He would say, "Mohammad saw the moon of his *Id*, the inner *id*, of which seeing the crescent on the Id day is a mere symbol. What is it to me if I do not see the same moon of my own inner *Id*?"

In Lahore, during the days of his Professorship, he played with his watch, Whether it was morning, noon, evening or midnight, whenever anybody asked him the time of day, he would seriously take out his watch, look at it intently, and then look at the face of the inquirer and just say: "Dear one, it is just one," and show him the watch. Those who happened to make this enquiry at different times asked him: "Goswamiji! Strange whenever we ask you the time, you say it is just one." "O Dear One, Rama's watch is such, it is always *one* by this watch." And he would laugh and pass.

At Denver, he announced his lecture as "Every day a New Year's Day, and every night a Xmas Night" and so startled the audience with the very announcement that there was long applause. So to say, he scattered his joy like a perfume in the choice of the titles of his lectures!

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It looks a little too fine an overdrawing of his own intellectual conceptions of life, but he always addressed his audience as 'My own self in the form of Ladies and Gentlemen'. In the manner of the rapturous richness of self-realisation in India, he called himself "Rama *Badshah*" or the *King* Rama, and he stuck to it like a playful child, for he seriously refused at Port Said to travel on the same ship to India with Lord Curzon saying: "Two kings cannot travel in the same boat." He actually travelled by the next boat, cancelling his passage. He would repeat his favourite verses of Urdu and Persian in solemn accents, with eyes closed, and drops of ecstasy falling down his orange-coloured cheeks; he tasted the songs in a physical sense, he pressed his upper lips to the lower and quaffed them. He would feel so intensely that his whole frame would vibrate with passion and he would raise his quivering arms to embrace the whole universe. He was seen losing himself in poetry for hours together. He would lose himself in the middle of his public lectures, repeating his sacred syllable *OM* (which to him meant God and the whole Universe) so much so that his American admirers observed him living most of the time outside his body. He had really almost forgotten himself. As said above, he always referred to himself in the third person, his first person was God's own. And so natural was his third person coming from him, that one who saw him for the first time, did actually think that he was talking about some third person, not about himself. When I first met him,

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I did not understand his references to himself for hours, till he explained them to me in more explicit language.

He drew out all the inner love of a man towards himself. His touch roused even in dry hearts the emotions of a poet. He had the power which is symbolically spoken of in Oriental literature as the power of love at the sight of which the dry gardens suddenly put forth new buds and vineyards become green.

As he entered Japan, he said:

> Rama has nothing to teach these people. They are all Vedantins. They are all Ramas, how cheerful, how happy, how quiet, how laborious. This is all that Rama calls life.

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CHAPTER II

THE MONK HIMSELF (*Continued*)

WHILE on board the ship, he was taken by the American passengers to be an American; the Japanese loved him as their own countryman. Mr. K. Hirai remarked after he had left Japan, "I see his smiles still floating in the air like plum flowers." Another artist who knew no English who heard his lecture in Tokyo on "The Secret of Success" in English, said, "It seemed to me he was a column of fire and his words the little live sparks that flew about."

In Egypt he was given a welcome by the Egyptians where he delivered a lecture in Persian in their own mosque. The paper next day described Swami Rama as a Hindu genius, to meet whom was one of their greatest privileges.

At Mathura, on his return from America, one morning, as the Pharisees around him pleaded for a new organisation in India to work out his ideas on nation-building, he shut his eyes in an ecstasy of love, spread his arms trembling with love in token of a loving embrace, as he said:

"I shall shower oceans of love;
And bathe the world in joy;

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If any oppose, welcome, come!
For I shall shower oceans of love.
All societies are mine, welcome, come,
For I shall pour out floods of love."

And he continued,

"Tell them, I am theirs. I embrace all. I exclude none. I am love. Love like light embraces every thing with joy and its own splendour. Verily I am nothing but the flood and glory of love. I love all equally."

His whole body trembled and trembled like a violin-string under the musician's fingers, whenever he spoke of God or man. If he were to be painted symbolically, his picture would be a white dove throbbing with the pain of some hidden wound!

When he was in a strange humour he would visualise a bygone poet or philosopher and talk to him, as if he had come, and he would talk to him like an irresponsible joyous boy that had no reputation of any kind to look after. His literary criticism was always affectionate and light. It was private and conversational, not studied and heavy. He would say: "What use was Shankara Acharya's hiding his own light under a bushel? He always quoted authorities. Well did Mohammad give the Truth on the authority of his own personal realisation. *Allah hu Akbar Mohammad Rasul Allah.*"

He loved the mountains and their solitudes. He lived in the densest forests of oaks and pines, and he walked out at the dead of night into pathless ravines and climbed the steep mountains like a child of

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nature, and glided into the very heart of things as the birds fly in the air. He was at his best when he walked in the Himalayan forests with his eyes half closed, looking askance at the mightiest potentates of the world.

Even while in America he would run from his social engagements, as if the stuffy atmosphere of society choked his mind. He went up to live on the Shasta Mountains. So fond was he of hard labour that he would go to the forests and bring fuel for Dr. Hiller, his kind host.

He enlisted himself, under his great intellectual necessity, amongst the apostles of the Advaita Vedanta as expounded by Shankara Acharya, but he preached it with his own intense emotion of a Vaishnava ; he called himself God, but he strove all his life to realise the Divine, and having realised it to maintain it on a certain elevation that he had attained. He was never neglectful of his great remembrance of God, but always alert watching the effects of men and things on his Godly mood. " I contradict myself ! Well ! I contradict myself ! " He called God the True Self, and in the words of Christ, proclaimed that one cannot have two things at the same time ; either have Mammon, which he called the lower, little self of man, or have God, the Higher Self. No apparent contradiction of his theory and practice was visible in his own character for he was a strenuous labourer who gathered God with all his senses and filled his heart with the gladness of " That Unnameable Mystery " !

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This striking poetic figure clad in orange robes disappeared from the Punjab in 1906. He successfully dropped the dirt of learning; and sought God in the dense forests and snows of the Himalayas, all bare, exposing his inner fire to the regions of the Himalayan solitudes to see if all the snows could bury the flame of his heart! In the close and loving embrace of Mother Nature, lived this divine Man. He went and sat up on the eternal snows of the Gangotri Glacier in *Samadhi*. His joy ordered 'Halt' to the snowstorm, and his smile tore the grey clouds to see its image in the sun. "One with Nature," he said; "Nature is my body. I could move the sinews of its soul as I move my limbs."

A truly Vedic poet, with the full realisation of the *Advaita*, but by temperament and inheritance a Vaishnava in his highly cultivated emotion, he was in his fresh inspiration more a Persian than a Hindu, while in his later days, in a way, he succumbed to Shankaracharya's charming philosophy of "Illusion" —"Maya". He would say—"If one realises Truth, even the physical body cannot drop, it becomes everlasting. Even Shankar was not a Brahmagnani. Yet in that sense the whole world is illusion, it never was. There is but one, that is Truth, nothing else."

He filled his surroundings with his own trance, and it seems the Past surrounded him as much as the Present and the Future. He always took up other people's songs and sang them with slight alterations, in his own name. It is the originality of dumb but

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living and original emotion whose deep silence makes every sweet sound of Nature its own. Have you ever listened to the black partridge's "Subhan Allah—God be praised," in deep forest solitude? It actually seems that it is the very voice of the listener himself.

In the hot summer of Lahore, as he came walking along the blazing street-pavements, they who touched his feet found them quite cold. "I do not walk in hot Lahore; I wade everywhere through the nectarean waters of the Ganges whose silver waves touch my legs as I pass, and lave me with bliss." "Do not see Ganga flowing everywhere?" he asked. Always ecstatic with emotion, careless of bread and raiment, with tears flowing down in a limpid stream, the Swami, though in Lahore, lived in the swinging cradle of the stars, and espied in the blue sky the old Kadamb tree on whose branches once Krishna sat and played on his flute. While bathing in the Ganges at Hardwar, he would lose all sense time and space in his meditative look on the tree, seeing with closed eyes the Lord Krishna, and hearing with shut ears the ancient music of His flute. He went mad with the music which no one of a thousand pilgrims bathing side by side with him in the icy crystal waters of Ganga ever heard.

Wave after wave of ecstasy overwhelmed him and buried him in joy for days and days. When he went over to America from Japan on his world tour, he took turns on the deck of the steamer at San Francisco port

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as if the deck was his home. An American struck by his wondrous exuberance approached him and asked him why he was not in the usual haste of getting down.

"Where is your luggage, Sir?" said the curious American.

"I carry no luggage," said the Swami, "but what I have about me."

"Where do you keep your money?"

"I keep no money."

"How do you live?"

"I only live by loving all. When I am thirsty there is always one with a cup of water for me, and when I am hungry, there is always one with a loaf of bread."

"But have you then any friends in America?"

"Ah, yes, I know but one American, you," said the Swami, touching his shoulder, and by his touch, the American realised, so to say, his old forgotten acquaintance with him and became his ardent admirer. This gentleman wrote: "He is a torch of knowledge hailing from the Himalayas. The fire can burn him not, the steel can cut him not. Tears of ecstasy roll down his eyes and his very presence gives new life."

An old American lady went to see Swami Rama in a private interview[1] and recited her tale of domestic troubles to the Swami, and wept for hours before him, as he sat cross-legged with his eyes

[1] Mrs. Wellman—this lady met me in India and gave me her whole story.

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closed. She took him to be uncivil, when a lady was weeping and crying so bitterly and not a word of sympathy escaped his lips and not a kind look. The Swami sat before her listening yet unlistening like a stone statue. "These Indians are so impudent and proud." As the lady completed her story of woe, the Swami opened his eyes, looked at her with his red insane eyes and said "Mother," and then chanted his favourite Vedic Mantram 'Om! Om!' She said to me that there burst from his eyes upon her the strange dawn of a new consciousness. "I seemed to have been lifted," said she, "from the earth, I swam in air as a figure of light, and I felt myself the mother of the Universe. All countries were mine, all nations were my children. I was so filled with joy that I must visit India, I must see where Swami was born and bred. I must go. So I come. My joy never fails me. Oh! the word OM reverberates through my bones. The word 'mother'—it lifts me up to the Divine. I would fain touch his feet. I would fain lie dead in the ecstasy that he gave me. Some springs of nectar within me have burst up, the crust is broken and I am holy."

At a lake resort in America (I forget the exact name) the Swami lived chanting 'OM,' and his presence gave heart to many a weary patient who came there for sanatorium treatment, and many got their health back from him. "A healer" they called him.

His letters are poems that hold in them the fragrance of his person, forming as they do the most

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interesting portion of the literature that stands against his name.

Here is a letter written on June 11th, 1903, from Castle Springs, California, to a friend in India; it speaks, like a living messenger, of his characteristic happiness:

On May 19th, while Rama was stretched on a boulder by the riverside, there was brought to Rama by the manager of Dr. Hiller's place here a very lovely hammock sent unexpectedly by a friend from Seattle. It was immediately suspended between a green oak and a red fir tree high up in the air. With bubbling joy and overflowing laughter, Rama rolled himself up into the hanging bed. The fragrant gentle breezes began to rock Rama to and fro, the river went on with its OM melody. Rama laughed and laughed and laughed. Did you hear him? A chirping robin was watching overhead when Rama was swaying back and forth. Perhaps he was envious of Rama. Was he? No, that cannot be, every robin, sparrow, or nightingale knows Rama to be its own. At any rate when Rama left the hammock for a while to let out the uncontrolled inner pleasure in frisking about and dancing, the pretty robin stole the sweet opportunity to try a swing in the hammock. Say, are not Rama's little birdies and flowers frolicsome, merry and free?

May 20; Noon. The President of the United States on his way to the north stopped at the Springs awhile. The representative lady of the Springs Company presented him with a basket full of lovely flowers and immediately after that he accepted from Rama most gracefully, lovingly and cheerfully the "Appeal on behalf of India". He kept the book in his right hand all the time and while responding with his right hand to the salutations of the crowds, the book naturally and spontaneously rose up to his forehead at least a hundred times. When the train started, he was seen reading it attentively in his carriage, and once more he waved thanks to Rama from the leaving train.

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But lo! Rama never invited the President to the luxury of enjoying a swing in the poetic hammock. Could you guess, why not? Do guess, please. Well, as you don't speak, Rama will tell you. The reason is plain enough. The President of the so called free Americans is not a thousandth part as free as Rama's birdies and the air.

Never mind the President. You can be free, even free as Rama, and have air and light as your faithful servants. Be Rama and Rama will give you all—suns, stars, air, ocean, clouds, forests, mountains and what not? Every thing will belong to you. Is not that a lovely bargain? Isn't it, dear? Do you have everything, please?

At four in the morning, waked by the kisses of Aurora and tickled to laughter by free zephyrs, welcomed by the sweet songs of carolling birds, Rama goes out walking on the tops of mountains and the river side.

Come, let us laugh together, laugh, laugh, laugh. Come soon, my child, look into the fearless smiling eyes of Rama and live close to nature and Rama. The ecstasy itself is I.

Swami Rama was a passionate lover of Nature. Whenever opportunity would permit he would fly to the hills and forests, as the eagle does to its mountain eyrie, there to meditate and draw health and inspiration from Nature's vast solitudes. Nature imparts of her healing power the most when man most fully yields himself up to her influence without either care or distraction. The Swami wrote the following letter to me from the Darjeeling forests.

Day passes into night, and night again turns into day, and here is your Rama having no time to do anything, very busy in doing nothing. Tears keep pouring, vying well with the continuous rains of this the most

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rainy district; the hairs stand on end, the eyes wide open seeing nothing of the things before them. Talk stopped, work stopped unfortunately (?). No, most fortunately. Oh, leave me alone.

This continuous wave after wave of inarticulate ecstasy—O Love! Let it go on. O the most delicious pain!

Away with writing,
Off with lecturing.
Out with fame and name.
Honours? Nonsense.
Disgrace? Meaningless.
Are these toys the end of life?

Logic and science, poor bunglers! let them see me and get their blindness cured.

In dreams a sacred current flows,
In wakefulness, it grows and grows.
At times, it overflows the banks
Of senses and the mortal frame.
It spreads in all the world and flows.
It inundates in wild repose.
For this the Sun, he daily rose,
For this the Universe did roll.
All births and deaths for this.
Here comes rolling, surging wonder, undulating
Bliss,
Here comes rolling laughter, silence.

And this letter he wrote from America.

August 10, 1903.

Under the canopy of starlit heaven
In a natural garden
On the bank of a Mountain stream.

DEAR BLESSED SELF,

Your letter along with some other mail received just after coming back from a most pleasant trip to the top of Mt. Shasta (14,444 ft. altitude).

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Dear, Thou shalt absolutely *do* nothing. Set well thy house in order, open thy doors, let them stand wide for all to enter—thy treasures, let the poorest take of them ; then come thou forth to where I wait for thee.

Pass out—free—O joy ! free flow on, swim across in the sea of Equality. At one jerk snap asunder, break off all ties and duties, and stand glorious in Thy God-head.

* * * * *

Look within, search within, you will always get the answers. Yourself is Rama.

Writing about his personality in his introduction to the edition of his complete works[1] in English, Mr. C. F. Andrews writes :

There is a child-like simplicity in what he writes and an overflowing joy and happiness, won through great self-discipline and suffering, which reveals a soul that is at peace with itself and has found a priceless gift that it desires to impart to others. At the same time, there is on every page a definite refusal to appeal to those lower motives that are ordinarily urged as making for success in life and a determination to find the soul itself, apart from outward circumstances the secret of all true and lasting joy.

* * * * *

He was not in the least one of those ascetics, who, in choosing the path of renunciation, seem to have left behind them all joy and happiness. He knew what physical hardship and endurance meant in a way that few can have experience of. But this did not embitter him or make his message one of harshness. On the contrary, the very titles of his lectures are sufficient to give a picture of the character of his own mind. "The happiness within" "How to make your homes happy"—

[1] In "Woods of God-Realisation", published by the Swami Rama Tirath Publication League, Lucknow.

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such are the subjects that appeal to him and his heart goes out in every word as he tries to make his message clear; it is the message of his own experience not that of another's. He is full of happiness himself, which he wishes to give to the world and he is never so happy as when happiness is his subject.

At one place, he draws his own picture as he sat once in America:

> Stretched beneath the cedars and pines, a cool stone serving for pillow, the soft sand for bed, one leg resting carelessly on the other, drinking fresh air with the whole heart, kissing the glorious light with fulness of joy, singing OM, and letting the murmuring stream to keep time!
>
> —*From his Forest Talks.*

Mr. C. F. Andrews says again in his "The Renaissance in India".

> . . . Another personality, in many ways far more attractive than that of Vivekananda, carried on the same movement of the new Vedanta in the north. Swami Rama Tirath was a Brahman, brought up in extreme poverty at Lahore, where he gained his education at the Forman Christian College and became, after a brilliant University career, a Professor of Mathematics. His heart, however, was wholly given to religion and he left his College work to become a wandering monk and preacher. He went into the wildest regions of the Himalayas, where he lived alone with Nature. A vein of true poetry ran through his character, and his buoyant joyfulness of disposition carried him through the severest hardships and privations. I was asked by his disciple Swami Narayana to write an introduction to his public writings, and I did so with the greatest readiness; for the Christian note is much stronger in them than in those of Vivekananda. Compare for instance, the following comments on the Lord's prayer with the mistake concerning the words "which art in Heaven" that I have already quoted from Vivekananda's writings.

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"In the Lord's prayer," writes Swami Rama Tirath, "we say 'give us this day our daily bread,' and in another place we say 'man shall not live by bread alone.' Reconsider these statements: understand them thoroughly. The meaning of the Lord's prayer is not that you should be craving, wishing: not at all. The meaning of that prayer is such that even a king, an Emperor, who is in no danger of not having his daily bread, may offer it. If so, evidently 'give us this day our daily bread' does not mean that we should put ourselves in a begging mood, that we should ask for material prosperity!: not that. The prayer means that everybody, let him be a prince, a king, a monk, is to look upon these things around him, all the wealth and plenty, as not his but God's: not mine, not mine. That does not mean begging, but renouncing, giving up; renouncing everything unto God. The king while he is offering that prayer puts himself into that mood where all the jewels of his treasury, all the riches in his house, the house itself—all these he renounces, he gives them up, he disclaims them. He is, in offering this prayer, the monk of monks. He says 'This is God's: this table, everything on this table is His, not mine: I do not possess anything. Anything that comes to me comes from my Beloved One.'"

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CHAPTER III

THE FRUITS IN HIS BASKET: HIS FUNDAMENTAL THOUGHTS

EVERY man who seeks after the Truth of Life, its labour and love, gathers a few ripe fruits of life in his basket; and if he is generous, he sits on the roadside and goes on distributing them to all who come to him, and often he goes to others who need them; but forever full is his basket of fruits, as forever he keeps on distributing them. Whether the story of a saint distributing a loaf of bread to hundreds of guests and yet having enough for more, be true or not, this basket of fruits that the loving and earnest enquirer after Life's meaning and true purpose carries about, can never be emptied.

We have seen Swami Rama, the Monk, in his orange robe; now he should be pictured in this chapter as the gay fruit seller with his inexhaustible basket of fruits on his head, or as one sitting on the roadside, and his hands in the basket of fruits before him, just giving the fruits away.

There is a state of life, he teaches, above body and mind, which is the state of inspiration—ecstasy,

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merging into transcendental Trance. It is there when man is in unison with God, is one with Him, is God. He who lives in that state of *Samadhi continuously*, is, verily, God Himself. Swami Rama does not speak to us of the invisible powers at work in this beautiful state; and he having Samadhi or the religion of Trance as his subject, is eminently a spiritual mystic who opens himself to the full light that shines beyond the broken lamp of mind. He says concentration means elevating one's self above body and mind. It is the ecstatic state—the Samadhi—from where all great ideas come, from where the poet brings down his poetry, the scientist his startling discoveries of the secrets of Nature. The ecstatic state dawns upon man sometimes in an extreme crisis of mental or physical pain. "Live in the ecstatic state and you need not worry. The world will readjust itself towards you, just as you rise to that state. The judge need but occupy his seat, and he will find all things ready for him." He says repeating this illustration at another place:

> The king's very presence on his royal throne establishes order throughout the *Darbar*, so doth man's resting on his God-head, native glory, establish order and life throughout the whole race.

The Prince who goes to school, or to play knows always he is the Prince. One should approach all one's tasks like a Prince Divine.

It is only when a limb is out of order, that you feel it. A healthy man never knows that he has a body, he carries it so light. Just so, the health

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of the spirit keeps a man always above body-consciousness.

The Swami is extremely fond of Absolute Monism. He says "There is one substance and One Soul, One Reality; Thou art That." No other philosophy satisfies him.

He says thou art God, O Man!, only cease to live in the body-centre. When body-consciousness, 'skin-sight,' is lost, God-consciousness, 'celestial sight', is regained. The world and its darkness is the shadow of body-consciousness, while God-consciousness shines self-resplendent in the human soul.

All is divine if thou hast cast the scales of this vague belief in matter from the eyes! That is to say for those who have once seen the divine, it is as difficult to be sick or sorry, as it is for others to be happy.

Crucifixion is the law of life. Crucify the body and you rise as pure spirit. This is to say, the basis of all ethics and social service is that you must suffer if others are to be made happy. He says those who wish to be worshipped as Gods have to undergo crucifixion of the little self. It is the little self, this matter or Maya; the rest is all spirit, the real self. God-consciousness of man whose every pore breathes the divine is the real self of man! He who 'lives, moves, and has his being in God' is God.

Concentration is all the secret, he says, and true renunciation comes automatically to a man of concentration.

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The repetition of the sacred syllable OM is the way of freedom from the little self.

"Without Simiran,[1] life is a process of combustion." "Simiran itself is God," says Guru Nanak.

As I now learn, this repetition can only be done when man is under the direct inspiration of some advanced Beings helping the Initiates on the path of Self-Realisation. It is the symptom of the spiritual progress by some one's "lyrical glances" as Emerson puts it.

In order of essential vitality of these ideas, this last should be written both as his first and as his last idea, in fact his All-Idea, his One Idea, in his exposition of the secret of the liberated personality. The creator of the modern Punjab, Guru Gobind Singh, has written—Those who love live, none else, none else.

For the exposition of these fundamental ideas, he had picked out of life many a beautiful image and allegory full of suggestions. His speeches are full of these little stories, a few original and others openly borrowed and strung together with a rare art.

There was a cage set with mirrors on all sides, and a full blown rose was kept in the centre of the cage. And in the cage, was a nightingale, and the bird saw the reflection of the rose in the mirrors. Whichever way the bird saw there was the rose! Every time she flew towards the rose in the mirror, every time she struck the mirror, and fell back wounded. But as the bird turned its face away from the mirrors, there was the rose in the centre of the cage! O Man! This world is the cage. And the pleasure thou seekest outside thyself is within thee!

[1] Simiran means the continual repetition of the Sacred word; meditation; spiritual concentration.

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As we run to catch our own shadow, the shadow flies. And as we run facing the sun, the shadow follows. Such is the nature of our desires. The more we desire, the fulfilment flies from us farther away. When we face God and cease to desire, all fulfilment runs after us.

A Faqir had a blanket, it was stolen by a thief. The Faqir went and gave a long list of the stolen property to the police next door. He said he had lost his quilt, his cushion, his umbrella, his trousers, his coat and so on. Enraged by the very length of the list, the thief came and threw the blanket before the police officer and said: "This is all. One little wretched blanket, and the man has come and counted all the things of the world!" The Faqir hastily taking up his blanket was about to leave the place, when the police officer wanted to rebuke him for a false report! "No! No!" said the Faqir, and proved that this one blanket was his quilt, his cushion, his umbrella, his trousers, his coat, and so on, and he demonstrated its uses to him in all these ways.

To the Faqirs and Saints, it is One God that is their every thing.

* * * * *

The brick that is fit for a wall, shall be lifted wherever it may be lying.

* * * * *

The arrow is to be pulled inward first and then suddenly released, before it is shot out of the bow. Just so, your wishes and desires are arrows shot by your mind. They cannot be fulfilled unless you rise above them.

* * * * *

Men are mineral-men, vegetable-men or animal-men, according to the expansion of their souls. God-men are the circles whose centres are everywhere and have become straight lines. Mineral-men are dead compared with vegetable-men, and the vegetable-men are dead compared with animal-men, and animal-men compared to man-men and man-men to God-men. It is, so to say an

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evolutionary course of moral life to realise itself as the absolute *Unselfishness* which is of the *Real Self of all.*

* * * * *

Prayer, he used to say, is death-in-life, when man trembling with feeling out of the prison-house of body passes beyond body and mind. Even a thief is bound to be successful, if he knows this art of *death in life.* Prayer is power. This idea of death-in-life is his idea of Applied Religion.

In short he preaches the religion of ecstasy, trance, Samadhi, and from his experiences he said that success, both subjective and objective, could be achieved if only one rises to that state of *super-consciousness.* He further preaches the continuousness of inspiration. He tries a great deal to teach the *modus operandi* for it to the common man; in substance his teaching is nothing but the statement of his own inner struggle. Indeed in a sense all that he has written or said, is but his autobiography.

A man of great, almost severe, austerity and independence of thought, he set little store by what one may learn by the mediation of a Guru or preceptor. To him the thought was inconceivable that there should ever arise any necessity for the agency of another to bring about the *at-one*-ment between God and Man who are but One. And so nowhere has he discoursed on the contact with saints, which alone vitalises *Self-consciousness* when it falls below a certain level.

He suffered from self-exhaustion, because he did not seek this contact of saints in whose company the exhausted *God-consciousness* is recharged. He failed

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to realise the *absolute necessity* of the "TAVERN," and its votaries, emphasised by Omar Khayam and Hafiz. All great prophets thought of holding converse with the Inspired.

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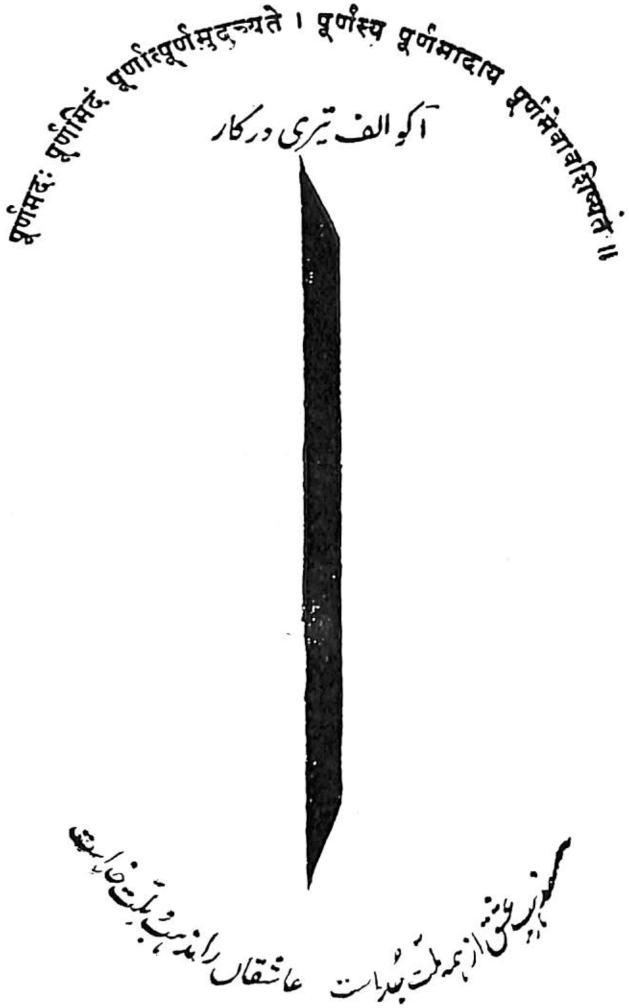

Facsimile title cover of the Periodical, Aliph, conducted by Swami Rama

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CHAPTER IV

THE FRAGRANCE THAT SUSTAINED HIM

IN the exposition of the fundamental thoughts of his life, he wrote his journals called "Aliph" in Urdu, with a rich treasury of quotations from Urdu, Persian, Sanskrit and English poets and prophets; he gave lectures and talks in America, again explaining these truths in a hundred ways, illustrating himself by numerous stories and anecdotes from Indian mythology and life. His English speeches in America are amplifications of his theme in this book "Aliph," and his whole life was consumed from day to day in burning itself as the torch of this divine knowledge. The following quotations from his collection taken at random from his Urdu book "Aliph," and, turning over its pages, rendered off-hand into English, as given below, give us a sufficient gauge of his mind and its treasures, the intimacies of its thoughts and the comprehensiveness of his intellect.

The following quotations are but a handful of grain out of the heaped bushelfuls that the Master has garnered.

> He for whom I looked blindly in all four directions,
> He was hidden in my own eyes,
> I knew not.
>
> --*Urdu.*

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Hir went searching for Rauja her Bridegroom, in the wilderness of the Punjab, while he was singing hidden in her own bosom.

—*Punjabi.*

The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of his breast,
Has never thought that this is 'I'.

—*Tennyson.*

Thou art woman the beloved,
Thou the flower, thou the bee, etc. . . .

—*Yajurveda,*

Antony sought happiness in love, Brutus in glory, Cæsar in dominion. The first found despair, the second disgrace, the last ingratitude, and each destruction.

—*Anon.*

I tear my bosom with my nails,
To open it out and drive all occupants away, to let the Beloved live alone with me.

—*From Persian.*

They bled Laila,
But the blood came out of the veins of her lover,
This is love, but it needs the infinite absorption into Him.

—*Urdu.*

If I speak of my blasphemy to the poor, divine,
He would scream in joy and say: Islam is stale.

—*Urdu.*

Have the transmuting eyes of the Alchemist,
Making all things of Gold.

—*Urdu.*

When the bird flies once out of the net of the fowler,
Then it is unafraid of aught,
And they are all auspicious to him, the net, the bait, the sky, and the earth.

—*Persian.*

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In my eyes and in my heart,
Thou art, O beloved!
So much Thou art and so always,
That whatever I see looming in the distance,
I think it is thou, coming to me.

—*From Persian.*

The drop wept and said: "We are all so different from the sea,"
But the sea laughed at the drop and said: "We are all water."

—*Persian.*

I am a strange rare pearl,
That even the sea is not enough to hold me,
I am a strange rare deer,
That even the forest is not enough to hold me.

—*Persian.*

The beauty of Thee, O Flower! is profuse,
And the basket of my eyes is too small to hold it,
The flower-gatherer of the spring of thy beauty complains that the lap of her garment is not enough to hold it.

—*Persian.*

The wind came and slapped the flower,
But it was he who wept.

—*Urdu.*

He is a little flame as big as a thumb resting in the soul of man.

—*Yajurveda.*

He is free and libertine,
Pouring of his power the wine,
To every age and every race,
Unto every race and age,
He emptieth the beverage,
Unto each and all.
Maker and original

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The world is the ring of his spells,
And the play of his miracles.

. . . .

Thou seekest in globe and galaxy,
He hides in pure transparancy,
Thou seekest in fountains and in fires,
He is the essence that enquires,
He is the axis of the star,
He is the sparkle of the spar ;
He is the heart of every creature ;
He is the meaning of each feature,
And his mind is the sky ;
That all holds more deep and high.

—*Emerson.*

If the Bird were to see me in the garden,
She would forego her rose,
And the Brahman would forego his God,
If he were to see me,
I am in my word hidden as the perfume resides
in the rose,
They who wish to see me, see me in my verse.

—*Persian couplet—Zebun Nisa.*

How would one look from his majestic brow,
Seated as on the top of virtue's hill,
Discountenance her despised and put to rout,
All her array !

—*Milton.*

A thing giveth but little delight,
That never can be mine.

—*Wordsworth.*

If the Alchemist has not reduced Self,
What has he reduced ?
Mercury ? Pshaw !
Self reduced is true Alchemy.

—*Urdu.*

Thou art as the Moon in the cover of a cloud
Come out of the cloud of this body,
Thou art the Moon, wondrously beautiful.

—*Persian.*

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The false ends, the Truth subsists.

—*Guru Nanak.*

O Liberty!
Thou huntress swifter than the moon, thou terror of the world's wolves! thou bearer of this quiver,
Whose subtle shafts pierce tempest-winged error,
As the light may pierce the clouds when they dissever.
In the calm regions of the orient day.
. . . .
The voices of thy bards and sages thunder,
With an earth-awakening blast,
Through the caverns of the past,
Religion veils her eyes, oppression shrinks aghast.
A winged sound of joy and love and wonder,
Which soars where expectation never flew,
Rending the veil of space and time asunder.

—*Shelley.*

The Beloved took me to his bosom warm,
And I laid my bosom bare and clasped Him tight,
Ah! I clasped Him to my bosom.

—*Punjabi.*

He is the Lover,
He the joy of Love,
And He the Beloved,
He is the garment fair of beauty,
And he the bed of luxury,
He is the fish,
He is the fisherman,
He is the net and the waters he,
He is the life,
And the death of All.

—*From Guru Grantha.*

He drinks the wine goblet of love,
Who surrenders his life first,
The greedy man gives not himself away,
And yet thinks of love.

—*From Hindi.*

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Unless thou puttest thyself, like the wood under
His saw, and be sawn into a comb,
How canst thou think of reaching her tresses ?
Unless thou fain be ground like the collyrium,
How canst thou think of reaching her eyes ?
Unless the wine-sellers fashion thy clay into a
cup,
How canst thou reach her lips ?
Unless thou art a pearl strung in a thread (unless thy heart is pierced by the arrow of
her glance)
How canst thou adorn her ear ?
Unless thou fain be reduced to dust like the
leaves of henna,
How canst thou dream of reaching and dyeing
her palms ?

--*Urdu.*

Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life, shall save it.

—*The New Testament.*

O make my wedding preparations,
Wed me O Brahman !
Come and sit in the courtyard of my heart,
And open thy book,
And read my fate,
And fix the date and the hour of my wedding,
My wedding with Him !
Wed me to Him O Brahman !
I am His betrothed,
I am His,
Unite me with Him,
Celebrate my wedding.

—*From Hindi.*

None compasseth
Its joy, who is not wholly ceased from sin,
Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred,
calm,
Lord of Himself ! It is not gotten else.

—*Sir Edwin Arnold's Translation of the Gita.*

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I went to consult a physician (on my ailment
of love)
And I told him of my secret pain,
He replied :
Shut your mouth and utter naught but the
name of thy Beloved,
I asked as to my diet ?
He replied : Eat thyself,
I asked as to things to be avoided by me,
He replied: Both the worlds—this and the
other beyond.

—*Urdu.*

When the individual is distraught by cares or pleasantry, or tortured by the violence of his wishes and desires, the genius in him is enchained and cannot move. It is only when cares and desires are silent that the air is free enough for genius to live in it. It is then that the bonds of matter are cast aside and pure spirit, the pure knowing subject, remains.

—*Schopenhauer.*

He who gathers his desires into himself as the sea gathers rivers, he alone gets peace.

—*Upanishads.*

Do any hearts beat faster,
Do any faces brighten,
To hear your footsteps on the stairs,
To meet you, greet you, anywhere ?
Are any happier to-day,
Through words they have heard you say ?
Life were not worth living,
If no one were the better,
For having met you on the way,
And known the sunshine of your stay.

He is the supreme spirit which informs
All subtle essences ! He flames in fire,
He shines in sun and moon, planets and stars,
He bloweth with the winds, rolls with the
waves,
He is Prajapati that fills the world.

—*From Vedas.*

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I said to her "I desire to meet thee,"
She replied: "If such is thy desire meet thyself,"
I said to her "I desire to sit by thee,"
She replied: "If such is thy desire, sit by thyself,"
I said to her, "I am thou and thou art everything,"
She smiled and replied: "Blessed be thy knowledge, it is so."

—*From Persian.*

Of the Sadhu, beloved of his heart, he wrote in the "Stamped Deed of Progress," his very last article in Urdu, as follows:

Does the ochre-dyed robe make one a Sadhu? Ah! One does see the God-dyed hearts under the ochre-dyed robes at times. The "madman" mad after Rama flashes therein. But everybody knows that his beauty-illumined consciousness is not restricted to the robes of a Sadhu! That true liberty is not addicted to any vices of good manners, styles or fashions of clothes and colours. The heights to reach which the very feet of man tremble to scale, the heads feel giddy, there flashes the light, there comes the signal of this mystic lantern. This sun shines on the snows of the Himalayas and on the streets of the common cities. The man of illumined consciousness is seen in the prison house and even in the still worse prison of the body, self-fettered by his very hands, but there lie his fetters in the prison, while he roams free in the infinite! In the dark cells, the man of God with his hand in the hand of God, though cast a prisoner is free. There roams he in all the six worlds! In the thickness of the crowd and its noise, a student while poring on his books intently, suddenly reads a word which cannot be written, and there he passes out of all limits and the book lies there forever waiting for him!

One goes out for a walk, fortunately alone. The moonlight is in its silver flood, the evening breeze is blowing, and there is the redness of the evening in the

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western sky, and there is the redness of wine suffusing all within! How suddenly comes the elevation!

The passenger has just boarded a Railway train, and is going on a journey. The wheels are rolling and the train is thundering! Just as he throws down the glass-pane of the carriage window, there enters the Divine Bridegroom into his heart! The passenger took a ticket to a destination, but his soul soared away to God-known, Unknown destination. The renunciation in bliss, the richness in trance besieged the man. This is the true Sadhu!

The Sadhus of India are a unique phenomenon peculiar to this country. As a green mantle gathers over standing water so have the Sadhus collected over India, full fifty-two lacs by this time. Some of them are indeed beautiful lotuses—the glory of the lake! But a vast majority are unhealthy scum. Let the water begin to flow, let there be marching life in the people, the scum will soon be carried off. The Sadhus were the natural outcome of the past dark ages of Indian History. But nowa-days the general spirit of reform, inasmuch as it is changing the feelings and tastes of the householders, is affecting the Sadhus also. There are springing up Sadhus who instead of remaining as suckers and parasites to the tree of Nationality, are anxious to make of their body and mind humble manure for the tree, if nothing more.

After trying to define the true Sadhu and trying to impress upon his country the vanity of having 5,200,000 ochre-robed monks he says:

If any one speak against the true Sadhu, Faqir, Saint, he would assuredly lose his power of speech!

The hand that would strike the Sadhu would be palsied!

He who would think against the Saint would lose his brain!

It is impossible for Rama to speak againt the true Sadhu. True Sadhu and a thought against him ever

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starting in Rama's mind!--Hari! Hari! Hari! It is impossible even in Rama's dream."

* * * * *

When Shiva is in Samadhi, then all the wealth and prosperity of the world, the victory and luck, the ghosts and spirits in Shiva's eternal cemetry of names and forms begin to dance round him and decorate the very presence of Shiva (Shiva=*Sahib-Dil,* the Master of Self).

O criminal! if you get lost in ecstasy this moment, while standing condemned at the bar, the judge would forget his own judgment and write what your new adjustment with God drives him to write.

My darling! the only crime is to forget God, your true Self, the quintessence of life, the soul!

It is written that Bhrigu the Brahman kicked the left side of Vishnu, *viz.*, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, and Vishnu rose and came and bathed the feet of Bhrigu with his tears. He who renounces self, obtains God.

He who runs after self, be he a king, he is a beggar kicked from pillar to post. It is the Law. It is not the monopoly of the ochre-robed monks, it is the light, it is for all. Moslems, Christians, Jews, Sikhs, Parsis; man, woman, child, low or high; need this one Light of Truth for their beatitude. Without this sunlight, the shivering due to cold cannot be cured!

It is essential for all to be educated and not essential for every one to be a professor. To know this True Self, this soul, is the necessity for every one to be happy, but to lose oneself day and night in this spiritual ecstasy is the share of a few, the true Faqirs.

> For him in vain the envious seasons roll,
> Who bears eternal summer in his soul.
>
> From himself he flies,
> Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze,
> Views all creation; and he *loves* it *all*
> And blesses it, and calls it very good.

—*Coleridge.*

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In the last issue of "Aliph" we find his attempt to introduce the style of free verse into Urdu, and one finds him following Whitman even in the title of his poems. For example, he begins the book with a long poem *To You*. And he says:

You are my Krishna, my Rama.
I see you, if I wish to see God,
I see you, and you are God,
Away with these veils of you and me,
Away these attires of colours and forms and names,
Away with these hopes and despairs,
When I strip you of all your coverings,
I see, if I wish to see God,
I see, and you are God.

Another poem is *Old Age*.

Wearing old age, I roam in the streets of man unafraid,
This old age is my cap wearing of which makes me invisible,
It is my disguise.

The Eyes of the Blind is another poem.

The injury that must have killed me, cured me;
I, a prisoner, a slave, became a free man,
The Sadhus run after God and do many things —close their eyes, shut their mouths and meditate—but I found Him while living comfortably in my own house.

He has written a very fine piece under the title *The Misbehaviour of the Moon*.

In my wayward wanderings,
One evening on the edge of a lake,
I saw the cottage of a weaver,
And by the cottage stood a young maiden, she was the daughter of the weaver.

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The breeze came blowing soft,
And the moonlight began its silver flow.
I saw the maiden stood motionless like a statue,
Her mouth was open wide,
And she was devouring the moon with her eyes!
The moon leapt from the windows of her eyes,
into the sacred temple of youth,
And there the moon melted away in the clear
lake of her heart!

. . . .

O Moon! stop! you thief! what?
Entering without permission into other people's
homes?
Like this! O bold Moon!
The waters of the lake have merely thy face
reflected,
But thou hast made the maiden's heart thy
home,
Ah! the secret that the scientist knows not,
The mystery that his telescope reveals not,
The solution that the mathematician finds not,
The riddle that Astronomy unravels not,
Thou thus revealest that secret in the hut of a
mere weaver.[1]
O Moon! what wayward wandering thine is this,
What is this calm luxury in that little heart?
And why strayest thou in the huts of the poor
and the lowly like this?

From what has already been said it is clear, that though his main theme of Self or Atman or God, for he uses all these three words in one and the same sense, was characteristically Hindu and Vedantic, yet his own practice was fed by the glowing life of the Punjab itself, its intense emotional literature of the men of God-consciousness, like Bullahshah, and other Punjabi poets, and the galvanising vitality of the thoughts of the Persian masters like Shams

[1] The reference is to Kabir and Kabir's self-realised daughter.

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Tabrez and Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi, and still more refreshing and life-giving reflex currents of thought of the Western Poets like Shelley, Emerson, Thoreau and Goethe. His intellect was nourished primarily on the Philosophy of Vedanta as interpreted by Western criticism, and, as it seems later on, his study of Vedanta was based primarily on the Philosophy of Kant which he had mastered. He had read Hegel and Spinoza. And his scientific proclivity of acknowledging religion in the terms of actual practical life, owes much to the study of the literature of evolution written by Darwin and Haeckel. Like a living tree, he drew his food, so to say, from the literature of the whole world, though he was deeply imbued with the Illusion-Maya of the Indian Philosopher. The apparent contradictions of the statements made by him, all the more adorn his spiritual genius, and this contradiction is the contradiction inherent in life itself.

Life alone defines in its infinite self-contradiction the Reality and its Self-Realisation. Our definitions are all abortive, being intellectual justifications from our relative standpoints which in themselves never touch life but at one infinitesimal unknown point. The contradictory statements made by poets, like Swami Rama, do not come strictly under philosophy, and no true philosophy can undertake to reconcile their contradictions. Their self-contradictoriness in itself is an evidence of an exalted self-realisation, or as Miss E. Underhill puts it "it is proof of the richness and balance of his spiritual experience."

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CHAPTER V

WHAT HE SAID

THE following excerpts from his writings, some out of his articles written originally in English, and some translated, some condensed and summarised from his writings in Urdu, and some selected from his American addresses, would serve best to reveal the contents of the veritable garden of his mind. These are the blossoms of his thought in divine inspired bloom.

The Path to God within.

The Path to God in your own self lies through renunciation of all desires. Renounce all desires and live repeating OM.

Renunciation of clingings is purity.

Without paying the price, you cannot reach God, you cannot regain your birthright. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Purity of heart means making yourself free of all clingings to the objects of the world. Renunciation, nothing short of it. Gain this purity and you see God.

Could you love God with even half the love that you show your wife, you would realise the Truth this second.

Who puts you in bondage ? Who is it that enslaves you, your own desires, none else.

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The very moment you cast over-board these desires, clingings, love, hatred and attachments and also throw off even the desire for light and chant OM for a second, you free yourself from all bondage and become well-balanced in equilibrium, nothing of yourself left with that person, with that body, or with that object . . . Sit still, chant OM and then think who is within you.

Feel that, and rejoice in your own divinity and desire pleasure from within you, enjoy happiness of your Atman. Throw aside all abnormal desires and inordinate wishes.

All religion is simply an attempt to unveil ourselves and to explain ourself.

The votaries of all religious creeds can at times be *en rapport* with Divinity and lift off the veil, thick or thin from before their eyes for so long as they remain in communication with the supreme Being.

All the sects in this world are: "I am His" "I am Thine" "I am Thou" Such a union with God is religion. Let my body become His and let His Self become my self.

Know that you stand above all wants and needs.

Make yourself the Flute of Krishna.

Have that and the whole Universe
is yours.
Just sing, just chant OM.

Why did Krishna kiss the flute and raise it to such a position?

The flute's answer was: "I have one virtue, one good point I have. I have made myself void of all matter."

Thus give up all selfishness, all selfish connections, all thoughts of mine and thine, rise above it, wooing God, wooing Him as no worldly lover wooes his lady love, hungering and thirsting after the realisation of the True Self.

In this state of mind, in this peace of heart with soul, pure soul, begin to chant the Mantram OM, begin to sing the sacred syllable OM.

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Do any kind of wrong, do any mischief, harbour in your mind any kind of wrong, do these wrong deeds, commit these sins even at a place where you are sure nobody will catch you or find you out . . . you must be visited with pain and suffering.

The wages of sin is death.

The wages of sin is death.

In the most solitary caves commit a sin and you will in no time be astonished to see that the very grass under your feet stands up and bears testimony against you. You will in time see that the very walls, the very trees have tongues to speak. "The moral law is that you must be pure. Harbour impurity and you must suffer the consequences."

The kingdom of Heaven is within you.

On OM, his Mantram.

The people of Europe and America do not wish to take up anything unless it appeals to their intellect. Even though we may not be able to prove the virtue of this Mantram by the logic of the world, yet there is no denial of the powerful effect which this Mantram, chanted in a proper way, produces on the character of a man.

All the knowledge of the sacred scriptures of the Hindus was obtained when the writers of these volumes had thrown themselves into ecstasies by the humming of this syllable.

All the Vedanta, nay all the philosophy of the Hindus is simply an exposition of this syllable OM.

OM has a charm about it, an efficiency, a virtue in it which directly brings the mind of one who chants it under control, which directly brings all feelings and all thought into a state of harmony, brings peace and rest to the soul and puts the mind in a state where it is one with God . . . Science may not be able to explain this but this is a fact which can be verified by experiment. Woe unto science if it goes against the truth connected with the efficiency of the sacred syllable OM.

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Inspiration comes when 'I' is absent.

When there is no duality in the mind, then all object-consciousness is at rest and thus the point of inspiration is reached. When Tennyson is beyond all idea of Lord Tennyson, then alone he is the poet Tennyson. When Berkeley is no proprietor, copy-righting Bishop, then alone is he the thinker Berkeley. When some grand and wonderful work is done through us, it is folly to take the credit for it, because when it was being done, the credit-securing ego was entirely absent, else the beauty of the deed should have been marred!

The real self which is knowledge absolute and power absolute is the only stern Reality, before which the apparent reality of the world melts away!

OM is the name of this Reality.

Simrin of OM again.

Realise it and sing in the language of feeling, sing it with your acts, sing it through every pore of your body. Let it course through your veins, let it pulsate in your bosom, let every part of your body and every drop of your blood tingle with the truth that you are the Light of lights, the Sun of suns, the Ruler of the Universe, the Lord of lords, the True Self. !!

Om represents *O-Am*, or *I am He*. Om represents the pure idea of I am.

A man who sings Om in all these ways, chants it with his lips, feels it with his heart and sings it through action, makes his life a continuous song. To everybody he is God. But if you cannot chant it with feeling nor chant it with your acts do not give it up, go on chanting it with the lips. Even that is not without use . . . But chanting it through feelings and actions would naturally follow if you commence humming it with the mouth.

How to make the mind rise higher into the celestial regions, to make the soul soar away up to the throne of God? When the benign light of the rising sun or the setting sun is falling upon the translucent lids of

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half-closed eyes, we begin humming the syllable OM, we sing it in the language of feeling.

I am the Unseen spirit which forms all subtle essences.

I flame in Fire, I shine in sun and moon, planets and stars.

I blow with the winds, roll with the waves.

I am the man and woman, youth and maid!

The babe new born, the withered ancient propped upon his staff!

I am whatever is,

The black bee, the tiger and the fish,

The green bird with red eyes, the tree and the grass.

The cloud that hath lightning in it, The seasons and the seas! In me they are, in me begin and end!

—*From Sir Edwin Arnold's translation of the Gita.*

Have God or Mammon.

O people of America and the whole world! The Truth is that you cannot serve God and Mammon. You cannot serve two masters. You cannot enjoy this world and also realise Truth.

You cannot enjoy the world, you cannot enter into petty low, worldly, carnal, sensuous desires and at the same time lay claim to Divine Realisation.

O dear people! you can never love anything so long as you perceive ugliness. Love means perception of beauty.

Fighting with darkness will not remove it. Bring the light in and the darkness is over.

Don't Grumble.

So the negative criticism, chilling, discouraging process will not mend matters. All that is necessary is the positive, cheerful, hopeful, loving, encouraging attitude. The best criticism is to make people feel from

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within what you wish to make them realise from without. All grumbling is as futile and fatuous as to say 'Oh! why is the lily not an oak?'

Law of love.

From all life's grapes, I press sweet wine. The beautiful Joseph says to his apologising brothers: "It is not ye that threw me into the well. The Lord's law in order to exalt me in Egypt, found no better levers than my own brothers." "Ye need not *think* so much of *sin*. If love breaks law it is the fulfilment of the law. Love is the only Divine Law. Owning through Love is Divine and owning through Law is illegal!"

Inspiration is God's doing, not man's.

Whenever we reach that point of saturation, when the mind is filled with the idea, when the whole being is lost and merged in the thought, the machine or organ or the musical instrument is taken up by the great musician, by God, by Divinity, and through this organ are produced beautiful, magnificent, sublime tunes. Great notes of splendid music come out of the organ, but so long as the child wants to keep the organ to itself and does not want the great organist or musician to handle the organ, only notes of discord, will be emanated by the organ; so long as this self, this false ego, this unreal self, which is the enjoying self is present, and wants to keep hold of the body and does not let go this body, through this instrument of the unmusical body only notes of discord will come out.

Inspiration is God's doing. When the little self gives up possession of the body, the person is inspired.

—*From his talks given in America.*

At another place, referring to the life of Jesus Christ, he says:

The ebb of the tide of inspiration explained in Christ's life as he read it.

He was a very good, pure man, what was he? During the first thirty years of his life, he was like this small piece of iron, no body knew him: he was the son of a carpenter, he was a very poor boy, the child of an unknown mother, he was looked down upon. Now this piece of iron got itself connected with the true self, the spirit, that is the

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magnet, the source of attraction, the centre of all life and power; he got connected with Divinity, with Truth, with Realisation, Power and what became of it? That piece of iron was also magnetised, he became a magnet, and people were attracted to him; disciples and many people were drawn to him, they naturally began to bow down before him. There came a time towards the end of his life when the Christ, called the piece of iron, was detached from the magnet. What happened then to the Spirit? The very moment all the pieces of iron which were attached to it fell off; all his disciples left him; the same people of Jerusalem who loved and worshipped him before, all those who had received him royally before, those who had decorated the city in his honour, all left him; his power was gone, just as the power of the magnet being taken away from the piece of iron, its power is gone, it is no longer possessed of the properties of a magnet. When his disciples left him, when those eleven left him, so much did the people turn from him that they wanted to wreak vengeance upon him, that they wanted to crucify him and that was the time when Christ said: "O Father! why hast Thou forsaken me." This shows that the connection was broken. See what the life of Christ teaches you. It teaches you that all the power, the virtue of Christ lay in his connection with or attachment to the true spirit or Magnet. When the solid body of Christ was attached to the true spirit, the Magnet, the body of Christ was a magnet also, but when the body of Christ was detached from the true Spirit or Magnet, then his power was gone, his disciples and followers left him. Now Christ regained his union with the Spirit before his death. You know Christ did not die when he was crucified. This is a fact which may be proved. He was in a state called *Samadhi*, a state where all life functions stop, where the pulse beats not, where the blood apparently leaves the veins, where all signs of life are no more, when the body is as it were crucified.

—*From his informal talks given in America.*

The truly strong.

In the twilight of Galilee, He saw *them* (the disciples) toiling and moiling, tugging and towing, hurriedly rowing, for the

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wind was contrary unto them. But there was no toiling and rowing for the Master. Why should not such a man sleep in the midst of the storm, knowing He could walk upon the waters.

* * * * *

Love the source of inspiration.

The source of inspiration of all the prophets, poets, discoverers and inventors in art and science, and dreamers in philosophy, has been Love, only in some cases it was more apparent than in others. Krishna, Chaitanya, Jesus, Tulsidas, Shakespeare, and Ramakrishna, were inspired in as much as they were lovelorn.

Love divested of all carnality is spiritual illumination.

Love the greatest bliss.

How blessed is he whose property is stolen away! Thrice blessed is he whose wife runs away, provided by such means he is brought in direct touch with the All-love. Abraham, says the Muhammadan tradition, at one time desired to take a sea voyage. Khizra or Neptune, offered his services as an humble captain of the boat. Abraham at first gave his foolish consent; but on reconsideration, he begged pardon of Khizra, saying; "My most gracious brother, excuse me please, I would prefer to have my boat without a captain, ferried directly by the hand of love. If you, the Lord of the Seas, take the oar, it is safe riding; but, ah! it is too safe; it will make me rely upon you, and bar me from direct dependence on God. Please do not stay between me and God. There is more joy to me in resting directly on God's bosom than even the bosom of my brother Khizra."

Says the desperate and forlorn lover: "Pray, flash on Oh lightning! roar on, Oh thunder! rage on, Oh storm! howl on, Oh winds! I thank you, I thank you. O blessed Thunder, you frighten delicate Love to cling to me for a moment. How infinitely sweet are the bitters of life! when out of its grapes we can press the sweet wine of delicious pangs of God-Love!"

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Dedication to God.

Take my life and let it be
  Consecrated, Lord, to Thee,
Take my heart and let it be
  Full saturated, Love, with Thee,
Take my eyes and let them be
  Intoxicated, God, with Thee.
Take my hands and let them be
  Engaged in sweating, Truth, for Thee.

Dear Reader! Did you ever have the privilege of being lost, nay raised, in love, unselfish love, giving all to love? Then you must be in a position to appreciate sentiments like the following:

"Soft skin of Taif for Thy sandals take,
  And of our heart-strings fitting latchets make
And tread on lips which yearn to touch those feet."

O my Lord, accept me as the most humble "slave of feet".

—*Urdu Couplet.*

The whole world beautiful to a man of Realisation.

When viewed from the stand-point of God-Self, the whole world becomes an effusion of Beauty, expression of joy, out-pouring of Bliss. The limitation of vision being overcome, there remains nothing ugly. When everything is my own self, how could anything be other than sweetness condensed. Self is Anand (Bliss), therefore, self-realisation is equal to the realisation of the whole world as Bliss-crystallised, or perception of the powers of Nature as my own hand and feet, and feeling the universe as my own sweet Self embodied.

Purity.

True purity is that where all beauty is absorbed in me and I feel and enjoy my spiritual oneness with all to such an extent that to talk or think of meeting any object sounds like a painful hint of separation.

Speak to him, then, for He hears and Spirit to
  Spirit can meet;
Closer is He than breathing and nearer than
  hands or feet.
The sun, the moon, the stars, the hills, and the
  plains,

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Are not these, O Soul, the visions of Him who reigns?

—*Tennyson.*

Unity in Self.

Children have a common practical religion of love, play, and innocence all over the world. This *unity* comes about by the natural faithfulness of each child to his dear sweet self.

To seek happiness is religion.

To seek happiness is in its essence strictly speaking *religion*, but the mode of realising *religion* involved in it may be compared to getting a peep into the Darbar through the grating of a dirty gutter. They resemble a flash of lightning which though identical in its nature with broad daylight, does far more harm than good, or, more appropriately, they are like the stealing of fire from heaven by Prometheus.

We read in the Bible that the Pharisees were very pious, their acts and deeds were very pious, but they lacked that tender, kind, and loving spirit; these people had a censuring, fault-finding spirit in them, which kept them farther away from Christ than Mary Magdalene, whose character was not the purest, a woman who was not immaculate. This Mary Magdalene had not in her this fault-finding, this censuring, this blaming spirit, she had that spirit of love in her and she was nearer to Truth, she was nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven than the Pharisees.

Desires make pieces of Self.

If you make yourselves this second divested of all desires, if you free yourselves of all worldly clingings, you know that every desire of yours chops off a part of yourself, leaves you only a small fraction of yourself. How seldom it is that we meet a whole man! A whole man is an inspired man, a whole is the Truth. Every wish or clinging seems to add to your stock, but in reality makes you a fraction, an insignificant portion of yourself. The very moment you cast overboard these desires, clingings, loves, hatreds and attachments and also throw off even the desire for light and chant Om for a second, you attain immediate freedom, Anand, Bliss Supreme.

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Elevate the mind by hitting it upward.

On the playground, in India, we place an instrument called *gulli*, which is thick at the middle and sharply pointed at the ends, with both ends raised above the ground, and we strike one end with a bat and the *gulli* rises at once in the air a little; then we deal it a very hard blow with the bat and it goes flying right into the air to a great distance. There are two processes in this game. The first is to raise the *gulli* and the second is to make it fly into the air. If the mind is to be brought into divine communion, first of all it is to be raised just a little, and the second process is to shoot it far off into the spiritual atmosphere.

Intoxicated man's action.

"Having nothing to do, be always doing" sums up Vedantic teaching. O happy worker, success must seek you, when you cease to seek success.

The records of Truth.

Christ spoke only to eleven disciples, but those words were stored up by the atmosphere, were gathered up by the skies, and are to-day being read by millions of people. Truth crushed to earth shall rise again.

Carping injures self.

Remember it always that when sending out thoughts of jealousy and envy, of criticism, of fault-finding, or thoughts smacking of jealousy and hatred, you are courting the very same thoughts yourself. Whenever you are discovering the mote in your brother's eye, you are putting the beam into your own.

Absorption in power behind the scenes is religion.

Let us watch a hero in the battlefield. He is mad with a super-abundance of power, thousands count nothing to him, his own body has no appearance of reality to him. He is no longer the body or mind and the world is no more existent, the spirits are up and every hair of his body is thundering out his immersion in the Great Beyond which lies at the back of the body, the mind, and the whole world. Thus, to the spectators, indomitable courage and heroic power are

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like a lightning flash of the Unknowable into the phenomenal world; but in regard to the subject himself undaunted bravery is unconsciously no more than religion, that is, absorption in the Power behind the screen.

* * * * *

The very word ecstasy (*e*, out, and *sto*, stand) shows that HAPPINESS, no matter under what conditions or circumstances experienced, is nothing different from standing, so to say, outside the body, mind and world. Referring to one's own experience any person can see the oneness of happiness with freedom, though temporary, from all duality. The longed-for object, and the wooing subject welding into one constitute joy. Thus manifestly the very nature of happiness is *religion*.

Self-Reliance.

If anybody should ask me to give my philosophy in one word, I would say, "Self-Reliance," the "Knowledge of Self".

Self-respect.

You respect your Self when you are filled with God-consciousness; when you are filled with the thought of God within, then are you filled with Self respect. By the worship of the body you are committing suicide; you are digging a pit for yourself.

Death-in-life.

The path of salvation, the way to realisation, is apparent death, that and nothing else, crucifixion and nothing else, there is no other way to inspiration.

Be God.

Let God work through you, and there will be no more duty. Let God shine forth. Let God show Himself. Live God. Eat God. Realise the Truth and the other things will take care of themselves.

Simple living and high thinking.

Try to make great and good men of yourselves. Do not expend your energies, do not waste thought on building beautiful and grand houses. Many of your houses are large and grand, but the men in them are very small. There are large tombs in India, but what do they

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contain? Nothing but rotten carcasses, crawling worms and snakes.

Do not try to make your wife, your friends and yourself grand, by wasting energy on big houses and grand furniture. If you take this idea, if you realise that, if you perceive and know that the one aim and goal of life is not in wasting energy and accumulating riches, but in cultivating the inner powers, in educating yourself, to free yourself, to become God, if you realise that and expend your energies in that direction, the family ties will be no obstacle to you.

* * * * *

It is strange, very strange, that people want to rob each other, as for worldly wealth, but as for higher wealth (spiritual religious riches), when they are presented with it, they want to kill their donors.

Friends and relations ought to be transparent to us, they should not be like veils and blinds. They should be as glass-panes obstructing no light, nay, they should be like spectacles and microscopes or telescopes, helps and not hindrances.

A rope-dancer at first rides the rope, single, alone. When highly practised he takes with him a boy or some heavy object and dances on the rope. So, after living a single life and acquiring perfection, a man may allow others in his company.

Man must conquer his passions or disappear. It is impossible to imagine a man presided over by his stomach or sexual passions—a walking stomach, using hands, feet, and all other members merely to carry it from place to place and serve its assimilative mania.

The reading of books and *learning* all knowledge is one thing; and to acquire the Truth is another. You

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may read all the sacred Scriptures and yet not know the Truth.

Death asks, not "What *have* you?" but "Who *are* you?" Life's question is not "What *have* I?" but "What *am* I?"

Thoreau preferred leisure to ornaments.

To give is a better bargain than to get.

Love is a disease if it impairs the freedom of the soul. Make it thy slave, and all the miracles of Nature shall lie in the palm of thy hand.

Let not desire and love tear and rend thee.

A soldier who is going to a campaign does not seek what fresh furniture he can carry on his back, but rather what he can leave behind. So if thou seekest fame or ease or pleasure or aught for thyself, the image of that thing which thou seekest will come and cling to thee and thou wilt have to carry it about—and the images and the powers which thou hast thus evoked will gather round and form for thee a new body—clamouring for sustenance and satisfaction—Beware then lest it become thy grave and thy prison—instead of thy winged abode and a palace of joy.

Keep your mind full of agreeable memories and pleasant associations of ideas; all the time saturated with happy thoughts and godly notions; you will have no occasion to suffer or repine.

It was Muhammad's *realisation* of God's love for man, *however little he may have put it into words*, that

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thrilled through the Arab world and drew the tribe as one man to fight beneath his banner.

The *Self within* is the *Self without.* Yes, but the Real Self, and not the *false self* induced by "sense-slavery".

The true work is *God-consciousness.* If you could sustain it then, whether in busy New York or the silent Himalayas, the effect remains the same. The *place, form* and *mode* of activity do not matter.

A man never rises so high as when he knows not whither he is going.

The suffering man ought to consume his own smoke; there is no good in emitting *smoke* till you have made it into *fire,* which in the metaphorical sense, too, all smoke is capable of becoming.

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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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CHAPTER VI

THE PRE-MONK DAYS:

A STUDENT AND A PROFESSOR

(1888 TO 1900)

AS already noted, suddenly between the years 1903-1906, Swami Rama astonished India, Japan and America with his great meteoric personality. Clad in the orange robe of a monk, fired by the success of Swami Vivekananda in America, and brimful of a pure, nectarious enthusiasm for diffusing through the whole world the rich truth of his own convictions, Swami Rama actually burst forth on the admiring and astonished gaze of the world that met him, as a truly inspired apostle of Vedanta. And this Vedanta was his own. It seemed he had realised life in its supreme beauty suddenly by some unknown sacred personal touch that maddened him with a divine intoxication. As some Higher One, came and touched the soul of Chaitanya maddening him for life, so it was in the case of Swami Rama. A glorious inspired personality can, under no circumstances, be the result merely of human achievements,

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however great ones attainments or accomplishments may be. He was adorned with Heaven's own hand that paints a lily white and a rose red and a violet purple.

He insists at times in very emphatic language on the ceaseless repetition of OM. His own repetition of OM was ceaseless. But none of his followers ever caught this fire, except for the days and hours they were with him. I never saw him excuse himself from this incessant labour. "OM," he used to say, "is the divine punctuation of life, without it, one cannot breathe the divine breath. Without it one dies." He admired a Bahai whom he heard lecturing somewhere in Egypt or America. He said "Ah! he punctuated his speech not with commas and colons and semi-colons, but with the Name of His Beloved—Baha! Baha! Baha." (Bahâ means Light.) Again when at Vashishtha Ashram, he was deeply imbued with the spirit of ceaseless Simrin.[1] If he fell while going on the green swards of Vashishtha Ashram mountains he would say: "Ah! I have fallen, because I have forgotten the Beloved! You have all come, you obstruct my vision. I fall, I grow weak, because I forget Him."

However powerful the will of man, it cannot be denied that the process of Simrin or the ceaseless repetition of Nâm is a symptom of inspiration, it is never an act of will as understood in ordinary parlance. It cannot be. Those who take to its repetition

[1] Simrin=The continual repetition of the sacred Word, meditation, spiritual concentration.

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as a matter of spiritual discipline by the sheer force of a trained will, do it all their life without any gain whatsoever. It starts as a mere discipline and ends a mere discipline. But those who are inspired cannot live without it; if the repetition stops, their skin burns up, as it were their mind is scorched, their heart grows blind and they prefer death to the stopping of the flow of this Gangâ through their soul. It is the Great Prophet of Nâm of the Punjab, Guru Nanak, who came and cleared this great confusion that for centuries clung to the fundamental secret of Brahma Vidya that, in India, leads to the right kind of development of human personality, and it is he who emphasised that man on this earth in order to rise, has to come under the influence of great Powerful Men living in other Higher Spiritual worlds, and it is under their inspiration that he is to develop his own Self. Simrin or Nâm is His Favour, it is the touch of Higher Beings. Guru Nanak points to the life of the invisible *Satya Sangat*. This is the Spirit of the Punjab that permeates every true Punjabi, be he a Hindu, a Muslim, or a Sikh. Self-Realisation is infinite and without inspiration all efforts of man unaided end in despair and in weariness of spirit and fatigue of soul. Without inspiration, all is vanity. That the Swami was inspired none can deny. Swami Rama lived the deep life of a Bhagat, of a man of Simrin, of a self-intoxicated poet, of a man maddened with the exquisite beauty of the Divine Face in the Universe, and this almost continuous ecstatic state of his mind

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does not seem to be the result of any self-discipline, but of a sudden onrush of Higher Inspiration. There are evidences of the sudden floods coming into him, and his self-discipline of years helped him to live on those floods with the tenacity of a mathematician, with the devotion of a lover, with the recklessness of a philosopher and with the will of a conquerer, even in times of depression. Swami Rama held fast to the tides. His poetry, his vast reading, his choice of solitude, and of incessant work all helped him. But no man with any spiritual insight could deny that the beautiful glow of his personality was of a kind that reminds one faintly of Chaitanya. The spirit of Bhakti vibrated intensely even when he was blazing in his own words as veritable God Himself. In San Francisco, when he said: "I am God" tears of bliss trickled down his closed eyes, his face sparkled, and his arms vibrated with passion to hold the very universe in his embrace. This emotion assuredly is not of any philosopher. This passion was of a Vaishnava Bhakta. In early days, he seldom spoke in public without shedding tears at the very name of Krishna for hours. He beheld Him on the Kadamb tree and heard his flute ringing in his ears, while bathing in the Ganges at Hardwar. In his house at Lahore, he read *Sûr Sâgar* with the glorious passion that brought him the vision of Krishna after which he swooned away. Seeing a serpent with upspread hood in his room that very day after the swoon, he beheld Krishna dancing on its hood. He told me that for days and nights he wept in

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love of Krishna, and his wife saw in the morning that his pillow was wet with tears.

I woke to find my pillow wet
With tears for deeds deep hid in sleep.
I knew no sorrow here, but yet
The tears fell softly through the deep.

—A. E.

This emotion never left him. It is in his poetry, in his prose, in speech, in silence, in sleep, I saw it in him when he was dancing on the sands of the Jamuna in ecstasy, at Mathura. I have seen him crying and weeping with this very love on the swards of Vashishtha Ashram. Even there he carried with him a miniature model of Krishna with flute in hand and I enquired what it was. He laughed and said: "This is Rama's magic not to be shown to you." He showed it to me and kept it.

That this blossoming of his personality was sudden is evident from the record of his letters which he had been writing to one Dhanna Mal, an old bachelor of Gujranwala under whose care the father of Swami Rama put this impressionable little boy when the boy joined the Gujranwala High School. As a boy, Swami Rama liked the man, owing to his religiosity and some extraordinary powers of thought-reading that this Dhanna Mal once possessed but which he seems to have soon lost. Swami Rama had, at Vashishtha Ashram, a long talk with me about the man and how this man having some occult powers, lost his way irretrievably in them with the natural result of a complete downfall.

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These letters (translated below) of a mere boy reading in school in extreme poverty, with the dumb ambition of getting the highest possible education, unsupported by his poor parents who wished him to be a mere wage-earner for the family even after his matriculation, and with the keen desire of seeing the great Divine Face of life, of meeting God, knowing Him, feeling him, being Him—letters written for years during his boyhood, in complete self-surrender to one who he thought would lead him to God, are the great autobiographical notes, which, incidentally give the glimpses of the hopes and aspirations of a poor Punjabi student, how he lived, talked, worked and thought. Swami Narayan has done well in bringing them together in a book form, out of which, the following extracts are given in the form of diary notes, as all his letters to the old Dhanna Mal were in the form of reports about himself sent to him. It seems there was a constant demand of money on the part of Dhanna Mal, and Swami Rama, whether as a student or as a recipient of a paltry stipend, or when earning a little by work as a private tutor to some students or sons of rich men, or as a professor earning about Rs. 200 (on which he had numerous calls from parents, brothers, and from his own wife who had to keep his own home going, at Lahore, with guests streaming into it then, as he was supposed to be a big man in Lahore) always met first the demand of the crude Dhanna Mal. His vow of self-surrender once made was so complete that he seldom acted without his advice or guidance.

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It is also clear that this Dhanna in the initial stages of his life, was of some help to the boy in directing his inborn trend of mind towards things spiritual and in inspiring him with a quest for higher things when the boy needed such inspiration. Swami Rama, a little before his death, had the courtesy to send a letter (through me) to Dhanna, and asked me to offer him a paltry amount as he had no one to support him and had grown then very old. He still remembered him, a few days before his death.

Of Swami Rama's early life there is hardly much to be recorded. He was born at the village of *Muraliwala* a village in the district of Gujranwala, Punjab, in 1873. His mother passed away when he was but a few days old, and he was brought up by his elder brother, Goswami Guru Das, and his old aunt. As a child he was very fond of the sound of the conchshell. He was a gloomy sort of child, fond of solitude. He would ask his teacher to give him leave for a little while to go to the temple to hear sacred recitations and offer that much from the time of his meals instead. He revered his Moslem village teacher like a devoted pupil. Once he asked his father to give his milch-buffalo to the Maulvi, as he gave so much higher food to his little son.

After finishing his village school education, the boy was admitted to the Gujranwala High School for his Matriculation studies. It was here that he was brought in close contact with that uncanny sort of person, Dhanna Mal, whom the boy

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began imagining as his God, his spiritual master. It seems he made to this man an offering of his body and soul in deep spiritual devotion.

He passed the Matriculation in March, 1888, and migrated from Gujranwala to Lahore to join the Mission College for his Intermediate, and afterwards for his Degree examinations. The following letters were written when he was a College student.

This correspondence shows a sudden burst of the blossoming of his personality evidently due to the opening of the inner vistas by *Krishna Avesh*, or the inspiration from the higher realms where such as Krishna live as helpers of the man struggling upward.

18th May, 1888. Joined Mission College. Got a house on a monthly rental of Re. 1. I have passed and stand thirty-eighth in order of merit in the whole Punjab (in the Matriculation examination) but could not get a scholarship. I have to pay Rs. 4-8 as fees in this college.

10th June, 1888. You ask why I did not go and live in the quarters near Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Samâdh. The great reason is that in those quarters I can never get the requisite solitude, nor freedom for my studies.

14th November, 1888. I offer myself and my everything at your feet. O God! most probably I may get a scholarship.

19th March, 1889. O God! I have got the scholarship.

11th February, 1890. I must send fees for appearing in the Intermediate examination. I have not obtained money from Bhagwan Das yet. I don't believe in my labours, I believe in your favour. If you order me I appear, if not, I will not sit for the examination nor send my examination fees.

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13th February, 1890. I was wrong in thinking that I had any choice in the matter. The *sahib*, the Principal of the college sent up my name and I had to sign the papers. So I must go up for the examination. I have got the money for this purpose from Bhagwan Das. Forgive me, pardon me! I am your slave.

18th February, 1890. I went to-day on my return from the College to see the university results. It was not out. I sent Mukundlal, but the boys had torn the sheet containing the names of candidates from Gujrat, Hafiziabad, Sialkot. This was mischief perpetrated by some foolish jealous boys, in resentment of the success of the candidates of these particular centres.

10th March, 1890. It is said God is merciful and peaceful. Then why are you angry? Why don't you forgive me? I fancy you've learnt from the House of God that I have some defect which will stand in my way of seeing Him, and having learnt that, you are disregarding me, for the world would laugh at you that Tirath Rama being yours could not see God. But my attitude is—forgive me, and look not at my defects.

> If you call me in, I know but this one door,
> If you turn me out, I know but this one door.
> I know no other door,
> I know this head, and I know its one place, Thy door-sill!
>
> —*From Persian.*

20th March, 1890. Examination in Persian over. Mathematics also done, very difficult subject. But if you be kind, nothing is difficult.

23rd March, 1890. To-day we had very stiff papers. It is physical science, an extremely difficult subject.

6th June, 1890. Why do you not write to me. I do my best, but I have much to do. I cannot come to you. We got two holidays only in name, the college task is so much that it cannot be finished even in 2 weeks. You should not misinterpret my inability to obey you.

11th June, 1890. The Principal gave me a letter to the eye doctor. He has prescribed spectacles for me and I have to send Rs. 5 to Bombay to get them.

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25th June, 1890. I got my spectacles from Bombay. I again went to the eye specialist to show the glasses to him if they were correct and he found them correct. I can see the black board much better now. The Principal also tells me to wear spectacles as the eye specialist says, and with them I see things at a distance in a much better way. That is why I have not returned the spectacles. What is your view now regarding spectacles.

19th July, 1890. Our vacation commences from 1st August. To-day is 19th July. Please never think I have turned my face from you. When one takes up a task after a while, while doing it, he gets an insight into it. And the worker then gets the knowledge how to do it best. He understands the ways and means of doing it without much thought. He cannot say the why and the wherefore of it, but he understands it instinctively. I cannot give you reasons, for to find out reasons is the work of philosophers. Everybody is not a philosopher, but everybody can get along his way quite nicely without giving reasons. When I was a young lad, I could judge the rhyme and rhythm of many a poetic couplet, but I could give no explanations and reasons. Now, after ten years, I find I was quite right, when I have now got full knowledge of the laws of prosody. If I could not give reasons then, it does not follow that I was wrong in my judgment. I had reason with me, though I could not know of it. This shows that a man of true judgment need not always necessarily give reasons for it. And at times we must accept his decision without insisting upon reasons, if we know that this man is essentially good and follows his intuition.

I never think I disobey you. You must always think that whatever I do is the spirit of real obedience.

You say I should spend my vacation with you at Gujranwala. As you say, I must go there, and I will anyhow; but spend all my time there, I will not. This is how I feel. I do not think of doing so. I may give you a few reasons for it, though I hate to have to explain myself like this and waste my time. But I do it

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simply to convince you that I am not faithless and you should never doubt my devotion to you.

My reasons are: I have just understood the difference between staying at Lahore and going to one's native place where one has to meet his friends and relatives. Not only that the latter do not provide the requisite solitude for study, but I find I lose that subtlety of mind which enables one to solve subtle and difficult problems. By going to one's native place, one becomes gross, loses the subtle thread of thought that grasps fine ideas. The reason for it is that the mind gets degraded by contact with physical pleasures. And I find outside Lahore, everywhere this defect of wrong contact and my mind is ruined. You may say that Lahore is not a wilderness, here too I meet men. Quite true. But I meet strangers here and do not meet them with the deep affection with which I meet my people at home. In Lahore, I meet people, but my Dhyanam (*meditation*) does not penetrate into them. It is all meeting on the surface. But with one's people, one has to give one's mind to them. Secondly, I know only students in Lahore and their contact is always invigorating.

You may ask me, if any other student like myself would stay at Lahore. Yes. Please listen. Rama Din who stood 1st in the Punjab Province will not go to his place even for a day.

Nobody can shine without labour, hard labour. I am for hard labour. It is true there are many bright students who would go home but I believe their homes provide them with requisite facilities for their studies. Besides many of them are not married, as I am. And even if they are married, they are strong and they do not let their minds wander away to outer objects of pleasure. But I am not strong; and I am afraid my mind is bad.

What people call brain, that too develops by exercise and by hard labour. If any student passes his examination with good results, without labour, then he merely passes his examination, he can never get the joy of his studies. It is hard labour that gives one the real joy of the student life. Don't you remember you were once asked

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by a man to compose a poem for him with his name at the end of it as if he was the author of it. He may announce to the world that he is the author of the poem, but he only remains just an author, the real joy of composing it certainly falls to your share. He is like the man who comes by his wealth and does not earn it. He has wealth, but not the joy of it. He only profits by wealth who earns it by the sweat of his brow.

Don't cut me off from my studies. Think I have gone away from you to foreign countries. Give me leave for two years. When the son returns, he is yours. When the soldier fights in the battlefield with all his soul unmindful whose soldier he is, and where the king is and what relation he has with him, he is the king's soldier and no one else's, he is fulfilling to the best of his power, his fealty to the king. That is the case with me. Don't think I am disobeying you, in not going to Gujranwala.

2nd December, 1890. I went to College to-day, there is some doubt now as to my being able to get a free studentship in the College. The Professor (Mr. Gilbertson) who used to pay into the College half of my fees refuses now to help me, as he says there is no such work available which he would ask me to do for the College and so he would not pay my fees in future. But if they can find any work for me to do for them, then I get a free studentship.

4th December, 1890. Got your letter. I know I can depend on you. It is you who have either to pay my fees in cash or get into others' minds and so arrange through the kindness of the Principal and the professor, that I may have to pay no fees at all.

10th January, 1891. Went to College. Persian is struck off from the course. Quite glad. It is God's great favour.

18th January, 1891. The Principal has given me a free studentship in lieu of some little work of copying lectures, I will have to do for them.

20th February, 1891. Principal has asked Rukan Din to see that I don't leave the College before taking

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my physical exercise. The Principal sees me grown very ill and extremely weak.

2nd April, 1891. The University people are thinking of reducing the total marks for Mathematics from 150 to 130 and increasing the marks of other subjects. This means they wish to elevate other subjects to the dignity of Mathematics. This is awful, distinctly a sin. This means they wish to wipe out the sacred difference between work and no work. Our professor of Mathematics was telling us that he would fight against it—with what results, who knows?

7th April, 1891. I have been out in the morning for a walk. On returning I find, the lock broken, the door ajar and all contents by way of brass cup and lota all gone. God be thanked my books have not been stolen. The thief forgot his cap here.

9th May, 1891. Lala Ajudhiyadas told me that he has seen two houses for me. I have not liked the one because Hakim Rai of Chail, an Arya Samajist, is living there. The second one is not so comfortable as the one in which I am living now. And the great defect is that the owner of the second house does not propose to take any rent from me but wishes that I should act as a tutor to his son, which means that for giving me a free house worth Re. 1 per month, he wants to take work from me worth Rs. 25 a month say, and above all his obligation of giving me a free house stands there forever! That is why I don't like to go into this second house shown to me.

11th May, 1891. My bedstead has all gone and its strings broken. So I spent five pice and got it strung up. Seeing the new bedstead well strung up, I am mighty glad.

19th May, 1891. To-day when I went to college, all my class fellows came around me and said, "Now you must come and live in the Boarding House of the college, for such are the orders of the Principal." After two or three hours, I met the college Physician who also told me—"Have you not heard of the new orders of the Principal?" And I told him I must consult my parents (by parents I meant you). The college Physician said—

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"But in any case the Principal's orders have to be carried out."

And after the college hours the Principal told me "I have ordered this for you, for your good, to come and live in the college hostel." The true facts are that my class-fellows once came and saw me living in this hovel and felt my other difficulties of meals, the distance from the college that I have to go every day, etc., and it is they that, out of sympathy for me, conspired against me and now wish to drag me to the hostel. They would not let me live here, I would have only to pay Rs. 3-9 all told, for board and lodging there. I know it is all in one's power to concentrate his mind in whatsoever environment one may choose to live. The hostel is not bad for study, many students stood first in the Province from there.

I bought some English books worth twelve annas. I have not a single pice with me. I will call upon Ajodiya Parshad.

If, however, you think I should not go to the hostel, you may say what reply I should give to the Principal.

23rd May, 1891. As I returned from college and opened the door of my room, a snake darted towards me. It was a crate, a very poisonous snake. I called for help and people came and killed it. All people of the college are dead against my staying here and wish my going to the hostel. They say if I don't change my habit of being able to concentrate my mind on my studies anywhere, then it would never be possible for me to live amongst men. The man who wishes to swim and yet refuses to get into water can never learn swimming.

And they say as the man grows, it is difficult for him to get a lonely place and time for solitude all to himself. And they induce me to give up my habits of living alone all by myself. The college Physician was also encouraging me that I would soon get accustomed to concentrate my mind while living amongst crowds. This is the only fear, otherwise I have all other physical comforts in the hostel life. In short, it seems my going to the hostel is inevitable and I cannot

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avoid it. You bless me that I may be as fit for concentrating my mind on my studies there, as well as I can do here.

25th May, 1891. I have got all figures out. If I go to the hostel:

(i) I have to pay nothing for the vacation months by way of rent, etc.
(ii) I have to pay for board only as many days as I take my meals. If any guest comes to me, I have to pay just that much for him.

I told the Superintendent of the hostel that my parents could not afford to pay all expenses, but he calculated and found that it means only Re. 1 more per month than I am spending now. And he advises that as I could get good food in the hostel, I could reduce some other expenditure of mine by Re. 1. And again he promises that he would see that I am not put to any more expense, than what I have now. And then he reminded me that I would not have to buy books, for I could borrow from my fellow students and read. And he also offered that if I would feel any difficulties, I could change my residence again after the vacations.

5th December, 1891. I have the post-card with me to write to you, but I was engaged in solving a very abstruse mathematical problem. I could not get time to finish off this post-card to you. All other college tasks in other subjects are still pending. It is after 24 hours, I have solved the problem and I must now get to other college tasks.

11th February, 1892. I have not yet been able to get to the college hostel. I may move there to-day. There was again a theft in my house. I have lost my quilt, bed and mattress, and a few vessels. A set of my clothes that was in the bed is also gone. But my books are all safe. Lala Jwala Parshad and Jhandumal say they would get me new clothes and they say, "Goswamiji! do not worry yourself at all, we will do all we can for you."

11th June, 1892. To-day some gentleman gave to the Principal Rs. 53 to be given to me. The Principal

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called me and said : "Take this." I asked the name of the donor, but the Principal refused to give his name out. I think it is the Principal who has given this amount to me. I then asked the Principal to reserve half of it for the college and only half for me. But he did not accept this suggestion. So I took the money and gave to Lala Ajodhiya Parshad.

9th July, 1892. Last night when I went to have a cup of milk in the Bazaar, I lost one of my shoes. It must have been pushed into the gutter. I tried hard to get it but could not find it. Next morning, I had to go to college with one shoe of my own and one an old woman's which was lying by chance in the house. This shoe of mine is very old now. So I went and bought a new pair for nine annas and three pies.

2nd August, 1892. I have joined the college again. The college Halwai (confectioner) Jhandumal has invited me with great feeling to take my meals always at his place. And as he insisted, I have agreed to accept his hospitality. I will see how it affects me. If I find it proper I will continue to take my meals at his place.

9th August, 1892. I am taking my meals with Jhandumal. He provides the bread of love. When you come, if you think I should not accept his hospitality, I will give it up.

9th October, 1892. To-day begins the session of our college. I could not talk about getting some tuition to any Professor. I met Bahadur Chand who told me that one Ladha Ram, Executive Engineer wants a private tutor for his boy, so I may get it and Rs. 15 for coaching him for two hours. I do hope something will surely turn up in my favour.

9th October, 1892. The house I was occupying till now came down due to heavy rains. Jhandumal saved however all my luggage and books. I have got no house yet. I slept at Jhandumal's last night, and took my meals also with him.

18th October, 1892. I spoke to my Professors regarding some tuition. They have advised me not to think of wasting my time, as the examination is near at hand.

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And they say quite truly that my time is more precious than earning Rs. 15 a month.

I am sorry to inform you that I have lost two friends lately by death, one Khalilul Rahman, B.A., and the other Lala Shiv Ram, B.A. May God have mercy on the survivors. These two events are very tragic.

31st December, 1892. A boy of my class has begun taking lessons in mathematics from me. I had no talk with him regarding remuneration, but he is a very good man and he will pay in some way for it.

Sardar—will complete his examination in a few days from now. The class-fellow to whom I began giving lessons is very pleased with my way of teaching him. He will pay at least so much as would be able to defray my house rent and my milk bill. Besides Sardar —was asking me to go and live with him. When you come here, I will do as you bid me.

23rd January, 1893. When I went to the college, the college peon came and told me that Professor Gilbertson wanted me. The class bell had just gone. Professor Gilbertson gave me a small packet and I took it and ran to the class. To-day I had not a single pice with me. After three hours when I opened the packet, I found Rs. 30 enclosed in it. I went to the kind Professor and told him that I didn't want so much money and wished to return Rs. 20 to him, but he insisted on my taking the whole amount. If you come now, you can take away this twenty off my hands and if you please, you might, out of it, give a few, as many as you please, to my mother. I don't send the amount by post as I wish you to come here. And I keep Rs. 10 with me for the reason that I have to pay two months' fees. As regards my usual expenses I may depend on Jwala Parshad.

12th February, 1893. I have come to the hostel. I will take my morning meals in the hostel and the evening meals with Jhandumal. The latter gentleman has with very great difficulty permitted me to take my morning meals at the hostel. I propose to make my native

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village *Murari-Wala* and not *Muraliwala* (*Murari* means God).

18th February, 1893. Jhandumal has got me 2 Kurtas and one pair of trousers. And also I am free to wear any clothes of Lala Jwala Parshad. So it is all right.

11th March, 1893. Got my roll number. In the house examination, I got 148 marks out of 150 in mathematics.

17th April, 1893. (This is a letter from a friend) Congratulations Tiratha Rama! You stand first in the Province in B.A. examination.

11th July, 1893. Bhai—who takes lessons from me and had appeared in the middle school examination from the Chief's college, had at first failed to get through. But his papers were re-examined and he passes. What a joy!

17th July, 1893. To-day I had gone to the river side. And as I was loitering about the Boat bridge happily Mr. Bell, Principal of the Government college came that way. He met me with great courtesy. Had a long talk with me. He talked of my spectacles, then asked me why I didn't use an umbrella, and so on. It was drizzling. That is why he asked me about the umbrella. He asked me to get into his carriage and he drove me up to the Government college. In the carriage, I recited many pieces of English poetry to him that I knew by heart. I told him too I read at least five or six books on my subjects in addition to the text books that I was then reading. He was delighted to hear all this about me. Then he asked me about my parents, whether they were rich and my reply was that my parents were very poor. He futher questioned me as to what I intended to do after the examination. My reply was that I had no intentions about my future. I told him if I had any desire, it was to spend my whole life, every breath of it in the service of God, to serve man, as the service of man was the true service of God. And my best service to people would be to teach them mathematics.

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By this time we reached his house which is in the compound of the Government college. He took me to the Gymnasium. He showed me his boys taking different exercises and asked me what particular exercise I took. I told him I took the Charpai exercise by lifting up my own bed stead (charpai). He asked the boys to get a Charpai. I lifted the Charpai in my own way by taking hold of its two wooden legs about 100 times in the presence of Mr. Bell while his boys could not lift more than twenty times. After watching these and other exercises of the students, he salaamed to every one and left for his house. As he was going, I went forward and said to him: "Sir! I thank you very much for all your kindness." After acknowledging my thanks and accepting my salaam, he went away.

4th August, 1893. I hear a lot of *Anhad Shabad* here. This place is full of divine peace (Ananda).

18th August, 1893. I have begun to read Yoga Vashishtha.

25th December, 1893. To-day Dadabhoy Naoroji, the Member of the British Parliament, arrived by 3 o'clock train. He was accorded a splendid reception by the city. Enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds. The Congresswalas gave him as it were, the very rank and position of Brahma, and Vishnu. Many golden arches were erected at different places in the city. And even now he is being taken in procession throughout the city. Thousands are in the procession. The people are full of great joy; it is overflowing. But it has produced no effect on me. What for is all this joy? I am grateful to God for this mood of mine.

30th December, 1893. So you are angry. Forgive me, the unripe young man, and overlook my mistakes. Men learn to ride only by riding and falling. The swimmers get drowned. If you require any money, I could send some from here. You should not be angry with me. This year I have not spent any money on extra books; I have only purchased my text books. I had the bad habit of buying books and now I have given it up. And I always think of spending still less on

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myself. After all I spend a little on milk. I attended the Congress simply to hear the great orators and speakers of India that had come and to get my own impressions about their art of delivery. That day I was thankful that I was not moved like the masses in empty joys of welcoming Dadabhoy Naoroji and now I say that the rhetoric of the Congress speakers gave me no joy, no inspiration ; it was empty.

10th January, 1894. I learnt my sister's death. I felt very sad, but it is no good writing about one's sorrows. I have wept bitterly for hours. I loved her as I loved no one else.

14th January, 1894. I am in a fix whether I should get a new gown for myself for getting the degree. It would cost Rs. 70. But it is impossible to get from anywhere on loan. I have spent much this year. I met Lachhman Das of Chahal. I have not been able to get a gown on loan. If possible you may get me the gown of Hakim Rai from Chahal.

My Professor was offering me his gown which, of course, is the American pattern. But by a little alteration and a new hood which would cost about Rs. 5, I could make it suitable for my purpose.

* * * * *

11th April, 1894. I have just read a new couplet.

> The empty handed are higher in rank than the rich,
> For the flask of wine bends its head to fill the empty wine cup.
>
> —*Dâg.*

This means that the wine flask full of wine bends low to salute the empty cup when it comes near it to be filled !

30th April, 1894. Lala Ramsaran Das is pressing me to go and live with him. He gives me the choice of selecting any room I like. Lala Sahib goes for the night to his house in the city, and the banglow is

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Swami Rama in his university gown

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guarded by his servants. Lala Sahib is quite a little Sadhu, he is so good.

3rd May, 1894. You did not come. Don't be offended for any reasons with me. My pupil has passed his B.A. Examination. I am so glad.

10th May, 1894. Nothing in the world is ours. If we want peace, we must consider our body as not ours, but His, and pass our days doing His tasks.

5th June, 1894. Maharajji! God is very good. I like Him immensely. He is so sweet. You ought to live on terms of peace with Him. He is never harsh. Only He is playful and at times what we consider our suffering is His humour. I know many things about Him now. I will tell you some day.

On this table at which I am writing this letter, are lying a few grains of sugar. And round the sugar assembled three or four ants. And they all began looking towards my black letters as my pen went on writing them on the paper. And they talked a lot about it all and as I heard them, I report to you their conversation.

But at first I may say that though my handwriting is very defective and not very nice, to ants it looked as wondrous as the paintings of China are to us.

The very first ant that started the talk was the youngest of the lot, a little ant, a mere baby-ant. The first baby-ant said: "Look sisters! look! The art of this pen! How it goes on writing round and round the beautiful letters. The paper on which it writes becomes a dear letter; men lift it and read it. It is spreading pearls on paper. What colours, what designs! Some letters look like our cousins (insects)! Oh how beautiful!"

Saying this the first ant became silent. But the elder one, with eyes a little bigger, spoke thus: "My sisters! you see not! the pen is a dead thing. The pen hath no power to paint. It is the two fingers holding the pen that are doing this miracle."

And yet another spoke, wiser than the last two: "Both of you are ignorant. The two fingers are like two

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thin round sticks; what can the fingers do? It is the wrist above the hand that makes all the fingers work."

And the mother of these ants spoke: "No! no! You are all wrong, my daughters! It is that huge trunk that does all this."

When the ants had had their say, then I told them: "O my alter egoes! My other bodies! This trunk is also dead. It is moved by the soul. All this presence is due to the soul!"

* * * * *

If you wish to come and stay here you are welcome. If you want to live there and need a servant, nothing better. I am ready to serve you in any way you choose.

I never feel angry with any one. I am very happy. People get into tempers and say things in an irresponsible way. We should forgive them. You must establish peace between yourself and them. Whether you accept your meals from them or not is a separate question. Do as you please, but you must have peace between man and man. The ornament of Sadhus is forgiveness. I know God will give you great peace.

6th June, 1894. I hope I will see you this Saturday. I could not come as first of all I had no holidays. Secondly, I have not got my scholarship. And if I come home without money, it seems a disappointment to every one nor do I feel happy.

8th June, 1894. I feel very happy. "My desire is that the dust of His feet should be the blackness of my eyes!"—(*Translated from a Persian couplet.*)

31st August, 1894. I live in solitude. You should also go and live up on the roof of your house, away from the world and study such books as Yoga Vashishtha. These books do not lend themselves to any reading at all anywhere below the heights of the roof.

27th September, 1894. Yes, the mind wanders. It is a difficult thing to control. Better fast. Light food and good digestion is half the truth of God.

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13th November, 1894. My father writes to me asking me to save Rs. 25 from my smaller scholarship and out of my other scholarship to save five rupees per month for the next two months and thus save Rs. 10. And thus I should make Rs. 35 and he will send me Rs. 15 and so should I make up my examination fees of Rs. 50. But my submission is that out of Rs. 25. Rs. 12-4 are deducted for the monthly fees, and Rs. 6 are to be further deducted for the days when I was absent from college on account of my illness. And then I have to get my winter wear and I have to live. Ah! it is very difficult to save Rs. 5 per month. I bought yesterday my winter wear, a pair of drill trousers, one waistcoat and one coat of Cashmir cloth and I have spent in all Rs. 7-12.

I am not going to explain things to my father. I hope my uncle and my father-in-law will help. Never mind! God will help me, as He has been helping me so far.

16th November, 1894. I could not write to you, as I had not a single pice with me to buy a card. To-night at ten, I have come to Lala's office and got this card out. I have bought my wear ready made. I had taken a business man with me. The wear is quite good.

7th December, 1894. The delay in writing a letter to you, is due to the fact that I had no pice with me. I did not borrow a pice from any one thinking I would get my scholarship in time. As I did not get it in time I have borrowed a pice for this post card.

9th December, 1894. In my opinion, we must not think of money when buying books. Whatever and however high the price of the book may be, it is nothing worth compared with the contents of a good book. Remember those old days when people spent dozens of rupees to get good copies even of small manuscripts. These are hard days for me as far as money goes.

16th December, 1894. So you are angry. What can I do? There is not a speck in my heart which I can see is making me any way different in my treatment of you. But you continue angry. It is best for you to orgive

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me always. "Your bitter words are sweet to me. Your anger cannot harm me Beloved! Your poison cannot kill me O Beloved!" I say in the name of all I have learnt that the real cause of your losing temper lies in your stomach. Your digestion is not good. You better take the following prescription which has done me good.

* * * * *

3rd January, 1895. To-day Mr. Gilbertson has given me a watch with a chain. It is yours; you may take this watch or the time-piece I have, whichever you like.

18th January, 1895. Don't worry. Whatever may be my condition, I would not see you in want of money. I met Pandit Gopi Nath. What can he do? Something will turn up soon.

25th June, 1895. Why don't you come and see me. It is difficult for me to come. One of the reasons is that I have no money. Though it costs only Rs. 2 but to get together Rs. 2 is so very difficult for me these days.

9th July, 1895. I hear the Professor of Mathematics of the Amritsar college is retiring. But this is only a rumour. I may get a chance somewhere. Met Pandit Din Dayal. He said he knew me already.

15th July, 1895. The Head-mastership of a Peshawar school is vacant, but the salary is very small being about Rs. 50-60, per month.

16th July, 1895. I heard five lectures of Pandit Din Dayal. Enjoyed them.

17th July, 1895. I had a talk with Mr. Bell regarding the Head Mastership of the Peshawar school. He has advised me not to go there. I don't know. Any way I am happy. I cannot come to you as I have neither time nor money.

20th July, 1895. Mr. Bell asked me to give him the particulars of the Amritsar post. I will consult my Professor whether I should go and see the Principal of the Amritsar college to get all the particulars. I am very sick with cold. Pandit Din Dayal is still lecturing.

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21st July, 1895. I heard that the Professor of the Amritsar college is not retiring for another year. Mr. Bell has written to the Director of Public Instruction about me. Let it be what God wills. I am happy.

21st October, 1895. (Sialkot). To-day I gave a religious lecture under the auspices of the local Sanatan Dharma Sabha. Though they had given no public notice, the compound was full of men, even Deputy Collectors and other big officials attended. I spoke also on patriotism. I saw the eyes of people full of tears.

2nd November, 1895. (Sialkot). I got a reply to-day from Amritsar that the vacancy had been filled before the receipt of my application for it.

21st December, 1895. I have got an appointment as Professor of Mathematics at Lahore in my own college, *viz.*, Mission college. For this act of kindness, I should love God much more.

23rd December, 1895. (Sialkot). I have taken nothing for the last eight days. I live only on milk. But I have just been on a thirty mile walk and I do not feel tired.

1st June, 1896. My father is very angry with me because I brought my wife with me here. He may be coming here, in a day or two. But who knows?

5th June, 1896. Got your letters. I am entirely yours. I don't consider anything as my own. It is no joy to me to gather the wealth of this world. It is no pleasure to me to get ornaments for my wife. I need no furniture either. For me, the shade of a tree for a house, ashes for my wear, the bare earth for my bed, and the bread begged from a few doors for my food—if I get these I feel very happy. To offend you for the sake of money? Tell me to live like an ash-covered Sadhu and I start forthwith. I would at the same time keep on working in the college. Whatever I may get from there is wholly yours. Spend it as you please. Give to my wife out of it what you like—I am a poor slave, mine is to work, work and build a little sacred shrine for God in my heart. This inner peace gives me that joy which nothing of the outside world can give me.

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The peace I get by my work for God is enough salary for me. I let this college salary alone, do what you may like with it. I neither increase nor decrease by the addition or the subtraction of such things. I am joy Absolute. My father is here since yesterday. So I cannot come to you.

11th June, 1896. Your two letters. My father was not out of temper. And why should he be ? I live outside my body. I offered him Rs. 50, the total amount I had left with me for the month. I will live on fresh credit now.

* * * * *

20th June, 1896. I delivered a lecture in the Mission college. The people were satisfied and the Principal instructed me to get it published in a book form.

20th July, 1896. I lectured here yesterday. Pandits Din Dayal, Gopi Nath and others present were wonder-struck. All are kind to me.

6th January, 1897. Sending Rs. 28. Please give half to my father. I have promised him. I have got only Rs. 3 left for myself. And the whole month is before me. I paid no bills of the last month, not a pie ! I have helped no student. And they are yet angry. And complaints after complaints come ! I have no cook. I am vexed.

17th April, 1897. The blister on my foot is still giving trouble. The result of B.A. Examinations is out. Not even 25 % of the candidates get through this year in the whole of the Punjab. One of my pupils stood third and the other fourth in the Province. Many are plucked in Mathematics, my subject. I will get no promotion this year. I worked so hard but with what poor results ; I feel so indifferent and sad.

1st August, 1897. I have come into this new house. It is near the stairs of Lord's Feet. (*Har Charan ki Pohrian*, Lahore). It is the glorious Ganga that lives at the feet of the Lord ! And it is but meet that Tirath Rama (the holy place of Rama) should also live at His Feet. Since coming here, I live at His feet and I bathe in the holy Ganges of my own self !

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17th August, 1897. If while going through our work and business, our mind is immersed in God and our feeling cometh not down from those giddy heights celestial, then blessed is our life. Otherwise human life is certainly fruitless.

25th October, 1897. (This letter is written to his own father.)

My dear father! Salutations to you! Your letters came and with them great joy! The body of your son, Tirath Rama is now sold, it is sold to God! It is no more his own. To-day is Dewali, I have lost my body in the gamble, and I have won the Lord God! I congratulate you. Now whatever you may need, ask from my Master. He will provide you with it or will make me send it to you. But for once call upon Him with faith.

For the last 19 or 20 days, He has come and taken upon Himself all my tasks, duties and debts. Why will He not do yours too? You must not lose heart. As He wills, so all men must work. Maharaj! This wealth of Realisation of Life is the wealth of us Brahmans, it is not becoming of us to renounce our inner wealth and go after the outer. Just enjoy once the pleasure of your inner Self.

23rd August, 1898. (From near Rishikesh above Hardwar.)[1]

You have persuaded me in your letter to come home. Your letter has been thrown into the running waters of the Ganges. Strange if you ask me whether I feel no pain for not keeping up to my duties!

Pain of what?

Unknown are the beginnings of these things,
Unknown are the ends of these things,
And just known is a little middle of the things
  that seem at present,
And so unknown when all is,
What pain is there?

[1] This letter is in reply to one from Bhagat Dhanna Ram asking Swami Rama to return to his home and to his duties in life.

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What shall the people say ?

My reply is in the Urdu Couplet :

> Wearing my own shroud as my turban,
> I have come to the street of the Beloved !
> Let them taunt me as they choose,
> What care I for thousands such !

You say of obeying you ? I am obeying you. From the Punjab of my body, I am going fast to the Home of God. I am mingling myself with Truth.

It is about midnight, not a man nor his ghost near by me. Within is the sound of ecstasy in tides, without me is the music of the glorious Ganga in flow ! Within me is peace, peace, peace, within me is bliss. It is the Night of my union, it is not dark Night, only the Night of Union has thrown the black curtain on the face of the world for privacy.

I mean the Night of Union has effaced both from within and without the world. The eyes are the rivers of nectar. At least to remind me at such times of Bliss of the world ! Alas !

Tell my people to think of meeting me at the centre where all meet and not at the circumference where no one can meet.

* * * * *

Where limpid waters flow like the moonlight silver in flood—

> To be sitting on those banks of the river Ganges,
> Where all sounds are hushed at night,
> With my hair on end in joy of His Name,
> Freedom from the pain and presence of earthly life,
> Saying "Shiva" "Shiva" I may weep tears of ecstasy
> And thus fulfil the being of my eyes !
> When would such good days dawn for me !

—*Bharthri Hari.*

The kings renounce their thrones to realise this joy ! The gods pine for the banks of the holy Ganges. And is

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the vessel of my luck alone so shattered to pieces, that after having reached here, I should think of my duties and false things.

People come to Tiraths (holy places), Tiraths do not go to the people. Tell those of my household that they should seek the feet of Tirath Ram (the God of holy places) who dwells in Tiraths (holy places), that very God. It is only then they can see the Lord Tirath Ram! Otherwise not. Till Satya Ganga floweth not in my house, I cannot live there, my heart cannot beat there. I cannot stop there.

Nobody does send messages to the dead to return, but those who wish to see them die themselves. I am dead, I am dead while still in body. Let not my people try to call me back. But if they be like me, then meeting is quite easy.

If Murliwala of Murali (his own village) becomes Murari—of God—then possibly the one who makes Tiraths (holy places) holy might come there. Where the Ganges of Peace floweth not, there my coming is difficult. After all, all dead bones have to come and rest in the Ganges. Why not bring them quite willingly when still alive?

* * * * *

(The following is another letter in a similar strain.)

Am I alone?

No pupil now with me! No servant! The human habitation is far away! There is not a shadow of man here! It is a wilderness, it is deep solitude. The night is full of stars, it is mid-night. But am I alone?

No! Not I! My maid the rain shower just came and gave me a bath! My slave-maid the wind is running everywhere. Which is that servant of mine who just answered my call—by a loud "Yes sir!" It must be a tiger or an elephant. Thousands of my servants are encamped with me in these bushes. And there they are in the little caves. Why and how can I be alone?

But no! I am alone! There is no slave, servant, no friend. It is not the wind, it is I; it is not the Ganges,

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it is I. It is not the Moon, it is I. It is not God, it is I. It is not the Beloved, it is I. I am. What means Union? I am! The world alone flies!

* * * * *

Am I idle?

The Mansarowar of my mind is full of peace. And the stream of joy is flowing out of my heart. Every pore of mine is bathed in bliss. Vishnu was filled with such an infinity of peace that He would not hold it within, so the fountain of peace flowed out from His Feet in the form of the sacred Ganges. Just like Vishnu, Tirath Rama Narayan is being filled with His joy. He cannot gather his joy within himself; he is sending the full current of the Ganges for the good of the whole world out of himself. He sends the cool breeze of prosperity and joy. Who says he is idle? I say, pray come and see this Tirath Ram and there is salvation for you. He is Ganges, He is Rama the ecstacy, the Trance, He is Rama the God.

19th September, 1898, (Hardwar). When I look outside, I find every atom resounding with the sound--Thou art, Thou art—If I look inward I hear, "I am, I am!" This one great music of the drum and the pipe lets me hear nothing else.

What am I? Where am I? Who lives in my palace? Who? There is no entrance to let in here the hows, wheres, whys, and whats. The monkeys of Hardwar have robbed me of my thinking faculty, the Ganges has flooded down my intellect, the kites have eaten away my mind, the fishes of the river have been offered my ego, my 'I'. The winds have scattered away my sins.

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CHAPTER VII

THE PRE-MONK DAYS (*Continued*)

ONCE he had with him but three pice a day to himself for a whole month. "Never mind," he said "God wishes to put me to the test. It will suffice for me." And in these days he used to go to a Punjabi baker's shop and take his morning meal costing two pice, and his evening meal costing one pice. But after a few days, the baker said: "Get away, you come daily and take bread worth three pice from me and pay nothing for the pulses I give you. You take my pulses free. Go, I would not sell you any bread." The boy then lived only on one meal a day.

In such poverty, he managed to educate himself, winning University scholarships, taking private tuitions and supported his wife and children, served Dhanna of Gujranwala and helped his parents too. While yet a student, his father billeted his family people on him, as the boy defying the wishes of his father had determined to go through the college education, while the father had wished him to be a wage earner of the family after his Matriculation.

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It was in his better days at Lahore, that his house was infested with guests from his village and he had, in his goodness, to entertain them incurring fresh debts every month. He was very fond of milk himself, so he offered bowls of well-boiled milk to every casual visitor that came to him. All seekers of wisdom that came stayed with him for his cups of milk, as he always offered it with charming manners all his own. He was very fond of simple wear and of the old Punjab Khaddar; even after his graduating, he wore dress of pure Khaddar. He got his clothes made and sewn by his wife. And he was throughout his short life a severe critic of himself allowing no superfluity of desires to stick round himself. He spent nothing on himself. In America, while working hard on his lectures on Hinduism, he would tell his friends, "You can excuse Rama for taking but small quantities of milk and fruits every day from you."

It is clear from his struggle for getting a job after his taking M.A. in Mathematics, how very difficult it is in India for poor students to get a way into actual life. And his letters more or less are of a character representative of the general conditions of the utter helplessness of the Indian graduates to win their bread. Education in India started with the Government services as its highest goal, and there, too, those were the mere crumbs from the table of the Higher Imperial services that fell to the lot of the poor children of the soil; and the main function of education in India is still to produce slaves to be

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driven by the superior will of the Oxford and Cambridge graduates inflicted upon them as the necessary result of foreign domination. The system of education, therefore, prevalent in India, then and now, must be rotten, which cannot provide, even till to-day, to its votaries, that much freedom of choice of vocation which even a common labourer enjoys. The latter must be willing to work and his daily bread is his without fail, and, after a few hours of labour, he is the master of himself, and while working, he knows he is his own master and stands no nonsense from his employers, except perhaps in large cities where capitalistic combinations are enslaving him and rendering him helpless. Not so the Indian graduate! Fie on the very purpose of education in India! As regards his devotion to the person of Krishna, Swami Narayan being in close contact with him in his latter days at Lahore writes as follows: "Swamiji was absorbed day and night in his reveries of Krishna. The mere mention of the name of Krishna sent him into trance. If he heard some one playing on a flute, he was lost in the illusion of the player being his Krishna. At Lahore for hours he roamed on the bank of the Ravi in thought of Him. He was always serious and solemn. One of his intimate associates spoke thus of his absorption: "Once I saw Swami Rama on the banks of the Ravi and the sky was overcast with purple clouds. Swami Rama was crying aloud—O there is my Krishna! O Krishna! O purple cloud-coloured God! This colour of the cloud is Thine. This colour maddens me,

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Why art thou hidden? Where art Thou? O cloud! why dost thou not tell me? Thou art floating on heights. Thou canst see more than myself. Tell me, tell me, where is my Krishna? Aha! I see thou art black, O cloud! because thou also art in pang of separation from him. Shall I not see Him, the Beloved! Ah! the world would bite me, if I see Him not. To whom shall I go and open my heart? O Krishna! for Thee, I renounced my relatives and friends, I threw away false shame and honour." Seeing the clouds parting he burst again, "O brother cloud! go, if you are going, but tell my Krishna to come and see how it rains in my eyes! Tell him,

> If Thou wishest to have the pleasure of the rains,
> Come and sit in my eyes!
> Here is the black, the white, the red and the
> raining cloud!
>
> —(*An Urdu Couplet.*)

O my life! how long! how long! I am impatient. Either quench my thirst or send death. Thou givest splendour to the Sun, beauty to the Moon, colour and perfume to the flowers, wilt thou not grant me the vision, the knowledge." Saying Krishna! Krishna! at last he fainted away.

He would shed tears in the ecstasy of his feeling. Once listening to a Pandit reciting Ramayan, he began crying and so painful was the effect on him that the Pandit had to shut his book.

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He once said :

"O eyes! what use have I of ye,
If ye see not Krishna, close, close forever.
O hands! if ye touch not His Feet, of what avail are ye to me? Wither up. Be palsied!
O Lord! if by giving life, thou comest here, I give it to Thee!"

Saying this, he began crying and a flood of tears came rolling down wetting his shirt, so much so that he fainted away. When he awoke, he saw a cobra with his upspread hood before him. He leapt towards it saying: "O Lord! Come, Thou comest to me in the shape of a serpent. O Lord! I wish to see Thee in that beauty to which Gopikas came attracted like poor moths." Saying this he again fainted.

A friend who was seeing all this entered his room and said, "Swamiji! Krishna is within you! What are you seeking?"

"In me!" said the mad man and tore his shirt and began tearing his bosom with his nails!

He again fell in a swoon and was in the helpless condition for hours.

Swami Narayan says that in those days, he once heard Swami Rama saying—"Ah! to-day I saw Krishna. He came when I was bathing and I had a full vision of Him. But He came and He vanished, leaving me with my wound gaping still more and crying for Him." Swamiji reminded him of Surdas and Miran Bai.

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He was a great student as is evident from his own letters. But Swami Rama once narrated to me an experience of his student days, which may well be recorded here. He said: "Rama had taken at night the most abstruse problems in higher mathematics and had vowed within himself to solve them before sunrise and if he could not solve them, then his head must be severed from his body. For the latter purpose, a sharp dagger was kept under Rama's seat. It was a very wrong thing to have done, but Rama tells you it was through such discipline, right or wrong, that he passed to get to the knowledge he gathered. Well! three out of the four problems were solved by midnight. But the fourth gave trouble. Rama had not solved it as the light of early dawn peeped through the window. True to his vow, Rama got up and took the sharp dagger and went on to the roof of the house and put the thin point of the dagger on his throat. As the dagger just began piercing, it actually caused a little abrasion and the blood drops oozed out, and Rama was dazed. He saw the solution of the problem written in letters of light in air. Rama saw the solution and then took it down. It was the most original work ever done. Professor Mukerji of the Government College, was astonished. Thus did Rama, many times and through hard labour, acquire the knowledge of mathematics."

One can understand his pathetic farewell, when he sang on the platform of the Lahore station, as he was going away from Lahore for ever,

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"Farewell my Mathematics!
Farewell my wife and children!
Farewell my pupils and your teacher and his teaching!
Farewell to my God!
I bid even Thee my farewell."

Thus he left Lahore bidding adieu to his beloved mathematics and his school with tears!

It was a determined relinquishment of personal things, even the study of mathematics most personal of all his personal relations, and as we see later, it was due to forces other than the organic impulse of his own emotional nature. One could understand his fondness for solitude and his disappearances for months in the forests for communion with and contemplation of the Divine, but one fails to find the complete forgetfulness of a philosophy-hardened monk in an extremely sensitive and poetic nature like his. He checked and controlled the infinite elasticity, the inconsistency of his poetic person, by his severe test of cold, intellectual, impersonal views of life, and he stuck to them inspite of himself.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE PRE-MONK DAYS (*Continued*)

ONE of the causes which led him to seek the robe of a Monk, in my opinion, was his meeting with Swami Vivekananda at Lahore.

Swami Vivekananda at Lahore was quite an inspiration to the people of the Punjab, his divine eloquence, his burning renunciation, his strength, the power of personality, his gigantic intellect, all made a deep impression on the people. Perhaps his lecture on "Vedanta" at Lahore was one of the most brilliant pieces of his oratory. It was in those days that Swami Vivekananda was made the admiring witness of the Amrita ceremony of Guru Gobind Singh. In his address, Swami Vivekananda spoke of the "Punjab of the lion-hearted Guru Gobind". The Swami was put up at Dhyan Singh's Haveli and I distinctly remember to this moment the huge number of the turbanned masses of Lahore that had assembled in the large hall to listen to the Swami. I was then a little boy reading in the college for the Intermediate examination of the Punjab University. The scene has been impressed indelibly on my

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memory. The hall was filled and there was an overflow of people in the courtyard. People eager to see the Swami pressed each other shoulder to shoulder, to pass into the hall. The Swami seeing these earnest unmanageable crowds, announced that he would lecture in the open air. The enclosure, the courtyard of the Haveli, is a large one and there is a temple-like structure with a raised platform in the centre. The Swami ascended on the platform and there he stood superb, a giant in his superb physique, robed in orange, like a Rishi of old, with his large fairy eyes magnetising the very air. He had a *dopatta* swung round him and he had a large orange turban in the fashion of a Punjabi. This lion of Vedanta roared and thundered for hours, keeping the Punjabis spell-bound and lifting them up to the delectable heights of his mental eminence.

Lahore was struck, as was struck far off America, by this bold, strong monk who owed his inspiration to no less a personage than Paramhamsa Ram Krishna. One could see the flame of inspiration burning before him in this great person. There was in those days one Professor Bose's circus playing in Lahore and one of the lectures of Swami Vivekananda was on "Bhakti" in Bose's circus tent.

I did not know Swami Rama then, but it was he who arranged all those lectures and he was of opinion that Swami Vivekananda was at his best while speaking on Vedanta for that was his subject. Swami Rama told me: "While going back with him to Dhyan Singh's Haveli from Bose's circus,

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I told Swamiji that in his lecture on Bhakti, he was not yet at his best. It was then after this, that his lecture on Vedanta was announced." This visit of Swami Vivekananda, no doubt, strengthened the silent ambitions of the young Swami Rama of leading the life of a monk, and to go round the world, preaching Vedanta like Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda had already defined Vedanta from a practical point of view and just as modern educated India, by the contact of the West, has discovered the greatness of Bhagavad-Gita in its gospel of duty, so did Swami Vivekananda interpret Shankaracharya's Advaita Vedanta Philosophy in the terms of Bhakti, Karma and even patriotism and humanity. Swami Vivekananda was the first to apply Vedanta even to politics. And it was after meeting with Swami Vivekananda, that Swami Rama made up his mind definitely. He had found an exemplar and an interpreter of the comprehensive kind of Advaita Vedanta that he was already evolving within himself. It was the example of Swami Vivekananda that gave tongue to his dumb self-realisation and then he went roaming in the Himalayas and he came down preaching the same practical Vedanta which Swami Vivekananda preached, but with an inspired madness, divine, all his own. Swami Rama gave a fresh and still ampler interpretation of Vedanta on the lines chalked out by Swami Vivekananda. Swami Rama, however, does not command that beautiful language and diction of Swami Vivekananda,

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nor his eloquence, nor his all-disconcerting humour and wit, nor his great animal strength, but Swami Rama excelled him in inspired cheerfulness, in the beam of the Unknown that played on his forehead, in the sweetness of song, in the shy maidenly grace of Bhakti, that liquid emotion that washed clean all worldly thought out of him, leaving him again and again in a state of silent ecstasy. Swami Vivekananda excelled him as a philosopher, as a speaker, as a lion-hearted monk, but Swami Rama excelled the former in his deep inspired ecstasy which was at the back of his sweet poetic spirit of cheerfulness, sympathy, kindly manners and a perfection of attunement with his environment. The intellectual kinship between them was, however, so great that we find them both delivering the identical message of the Vedanta in their world-tours, and even their exhortations to their countrymen on patriotism and nation-making are very similar. As said above, Swami Rama had caught the fire of Swami Vivekananda's orange robe at Lahore, and it was after about two years that he too turned a monk, he—a married man with all the passion of a poet, with a mind and a will that both melt into liquid silver by the fire of his emotions—turned a monk! As said elsewhere, it was certainly a step taken as the result of an extraneous impulse, rather than the immediate outcome of his own normal inward mental or spiritual advancement.

Thus born in a very poor Brahman's family in the Punjab, he was the patient architect of himself

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from childhood to manhood. He built himself little by little, moment by moment, and day by day. It may be said that perhaps the whole career of his future life was in a way sketched already before his mind's eye, because even as a boy he was working so gravely, and so consciously for a definite mission. There was the resolution of a riper mind in the steps of the poor Brahman boy who faltered not under any circumstances, and who was never daunted by any difficulties. He was a typical student who loved to study not with any hope of gaining worldly ends, but for satisfying the ever-growing thirst for knowledge which was firing his soul anew with every new sun. His daily studies were sanctified oblations on the altar of his *Havan Kund*.

He would forego an extra suit and an extra loaf or even a day's meal for the sake of oil for his midnight lamp to read his books. It was not unoften in his student life that he kept absorbed in his studies from sunset to sunrise. There was that love of knowledge which pulled strongly at his heart so much that the ordinary comforts and physical needs of student life were entirely forgotten. Hunger and thirst, cold and heat could not tell upon this supreme passion that he felt towards knowledge. There are witnesses of his student life still living at Gujranwala and Lahore, who say that the pure-minded Goswami toiled unarmed and alone day and night, fighting with life without the sinews of war, and they remember the occasions when even in this country of boasted charity, the poor Brahman boy had for

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many a day little or nothing to eat, though every muscle of his face always exhibited an ineffable joy and satisfaction.

The knowledge, therefore, that Swami Rama brings to bear upon his teachings in after life was gathered grain by grain with the greatest penance and the hardest labour and is full of intense pathos for us, remembering as we do the extremely penurious and thorny life in which he managed to bloom up as a poet, philosopher, scholar and mathematician. When the Principal of the Government College, Lahore, offered to send up his name for the Provincial Service, Rama expressed himself with a bent head and a moist eye that he had not toiled so much for selling his harvest but for distributing it. He would therefore prefer being a teacher to being an executive official.

Enjoying perfect intellectual isolation from his surroundings even as a student, Rama lived by himself keeping company only with the greatest of men through his books. He looked neither to the right nor to the left being wholly absorbed in his own high pursuits. He set his life in tune with his ideals. All who knew him in his student life reverently acknowledged the transparent purity of his character and moral purpose of his life. In his student life, Swami Rama was growing *inwardly*. He was melting and casting and melting and casting his life again and again into moulds of perfection. He went on chiselling day and night to shape out the curve lines of his model and to finish its beauty.

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From good to better, he stood daily self-surpassed. When he became a Professor of Mathematics the very first pamphlet he wrote was "How to Study Mathematics". The lesson he teaches there is that overloading the stomach with greasy and rich stuffs makes even an intelligent student unfit and dull, while, on the other hand, light food always gives a free and uncongested brain which forms the secret of a successful student life. He says that purity of mind is another essential condition for securing proper attention to work, and devoid of this one element no methods would be able to keep the mind in the proper mood of a student.

Thus he condenses the experience of his student life in such simple pieces of advice as we find in the said pamphlet. He does not write for writing's sake, nor speak for speaking's sake, but he takes his pen or opens his lips only when he has something to give.

As a Swami we see him always living in the divine and we do not recognise in him the humble and shy student boy that he was. His voice has grown powerful, his character eloquent, his realisation inspiring and his person magnetic over and over. His presence charmed the very atmosphere around him. In his company, the seasons of one's mind shifted in a beautiful panoramic rotation. Now the the spell of sincerity moved the audience to tears and now to smiles of supreme satisfaction. He succeeded like a poet in exalting in our eyes the commonest things into the highest Avataras of

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divinity. Some people by his touch got tastes of a poet, others of a painter, some of a mystic and some of a soldier. Many common minds felt inspired to such an extent that they felt a distinct increase in their mental power.

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CHAPTER IX

LOVE OF MOUNTAINS AND SOLITUDES

SWAMI RAMA loved mountains. He scaled the Gangetic glaciers, the great Bunder Puchh, and from Jamnotri he returned to Gangotri by crossing the tops of the intervening glaciers. In America, he scaled the Shasta Mountains. On his return to India from there, he again climbed to the Sahstaru Tal from which flows out the Billing Ganga. That Swami Rama who in his young student life, was physically so weak and frail, suddenly got the enthusiasm to play upon the bosom of the glaciers of the Himalayas and go there to the eternal snows, ill-clad, almost bare, defying the snow storms, shows, apart from his self-discipline, the flame of inspiration in him burning in its imperishable fire. His passion for mountaineering is a symbol and a symptom of his inner life that rose in its superb glow to kiss the eternal snows of the Himalayas with such an insatiable pleasure.

On his return to the plains, he was photographed at Lucknow. Though no photograph can truly interpret the man, yet it gives a general impression,

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and in this Lucknow impression, he looks as holy as a snowpeak. Different from this face of his are all others that the camera could catch. There is the bloom of snows on his temples, in this portrait of his. I see the invisible light of *Krishna Avesh* in his eyes here.

He wrote the following letters while living in the Himalaya mountains:

GANGOTRI,

September, *1901*.

The holy Ganges could not bear Rama's separation. She succeeded at last in drawing him to herself after a little more than a month's absence. Notwithstanding all her culture, she began to rain sweet tears of joy on meeting him. Who can describe the nascent beauty and playful freaks of the dear Ganges at Gangotri? Very praiseworthy is the upright character of her playmates, *viz.*, the white mountains and innocent Deodar trees. The latter in their tall stature vie with the Persian poet's lady-love, while their balmy breath invigorates, exhilarates, and elevates.

Pilgrims after leaving Jamnotri, usually reach Gangotri in not less than ten days. In three days after leaving Jamnotri did Rama arrive at Gangotri. He came by a route as yet untrodden by any inhabitant of the plains. This route is called the Chhayan Route by mountaineers. Three successive nights were passed in lonely forest caves. We came across no hamlet or hut. No biped was visible throughout the journey.

The Chhayan Route is so called because almost all the year round it is covered with shade. The shade of trees, did I say? The route is for the most part enveloped by clouds. Shepherds of villages near Jamnotri and Gangotri, while tending their flocks, every year spend two are three months in forests. They happened to meet near the snow-clad peaks, called Bandar Puchh and Hanuman Mukh, which connect the sources of the

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two far-famed sister rivers. Thus the route was discovered. Exuberant flowers make almost the whole of the way a veritable field of cloth of gold. Yellow, blue, and purple flowers are met with in wild plenty. Lots of lilies, violets, daisies, and tulips of different varieties; Guggal, Dhoop, Mamiri of lovely tints; Saffron, Itrasoo, and other plants exhaling exceedingly sweet scent; Bher Gadda and lordly Brahma Kanwal with its calyx filled with fine icicles of frost: all these make these mountains a pleasure garden worthy of the Lord of Earth and Heaven.

* * * * *

. . . At places the pulse of fragrance that comes and goes on the airy undulations affected Rama like sweet music. Here one will find in rich abundance wind-wafted odour which is sweet and soft; "sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, and soft as their parting tears." Fair fields on the tops of these giant mountains are stretched like decorated carpets. Do they serve the Gods as dining tables or as dancing grounds? Murmuring streams and rivers thundering over precipices are not missing in these fairy scenes. On certain summits, the vision enjoys perfect freedom, unimpeded it travels, far and wide on all sides, no hills to stand in its way, no angry clouds to mar its course. Some of the grand peaks in their zeal to pierce the sky and cleave the cloud-land have, altogether forgotten as it were to stop; and appear to melt into the highest heavens.

* * * * *

The present dwelling of Rama is a snug cottage, in the mountain amphitheatre, surrounded by a greensward in a lonely natural garden commanding a fair view of the Ganges . . . Ram Buti grows in profusion here. Sparrows and other birds twitter heartily all the day long. The climate is bracing. The song of the Ganges and the chorus of birds keep up a celestial festival all the time. Here the Ganges valley is very broad. Gangi flows in a vast *Maidan*, so to speak. The current, however, is very swift. Still it has several times been waded across by Rama. Kedar and Badri have often invited Rama Badsha most affectionately. But dear Gangi at the very thought of

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separation, feels sorrowful and crest-fallen, and Rama does not like to displease her and see her dejected.

Sumeru Visited

While living in the Jamnotri Cave, Rama's daily food was Marach (red-pepper) and potatoes once in twenty-four hours. This brought on indigestion. On the fourth day of ill-health early in the morning, after bathing in the hot springs, he started on his trip to Sumeroo, wearing no clothes except a Kaupin (a rag round the loins), no shoes, no head-dress, no umbrella. Five strong mountaineers, having warm clothes on, accompanied him. Narayan and Tularam were sent back down to Gharsali.

To begin with, we had to cross the infant Jumna three or four times. Then the Jumna valley was found blocked up by an enormous avalanche about forty-five yards in height and one furlong and a half in length. Steep mountains like two vertical walls stood proudly on both sides. Have they conspired to deter Rama Badshah from advancing further? Never mind! All obstructions must disappear before a strong adamantine will. We began to climb the Western mountain wall. Now and again we could get absolutely no foot-hold and had to support our bodies partly by catching hold of the twigs of fragrant but thorny rose bushes, and partly by entangling our toes in the tender blades of the soft mountain grass called Cha. At times we were within an inch of sure death. A deep abyss with the cold bed of snow filling the Jumna Valley was as a grave wide agape just ready to give too hospitable a reception to any one of the party whose foot might tremble ever so little. From beneath the slow, faint, murmuring sound of the Jumna was still reaching our ears like the death dirge of muffled drums. Thus we had to move along in the jaws of Death, as it were, for three-quarters of an hour. Strange situation indeed, Death staring us in the face on one side and the air redolent with sweet scent refreshing and animating, on the other. By this circuitous, dangerous enterprise, we reached at last beyond the awful avalanche. Here the Jumna left. The party ascended a steep mountain. There was no road, no foot-path, nothing of the kind. A thick dense forest was

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passed where we could not see the wood of the trees. Rama's body received several scratches. After a little more than an hour's struggle in this forest of oak and birch trees we reached open ground covered all over with smaller growth. The atmosphere was charged, rather saturated with delicious odours. The ascent put all the mountaineers out of breath. Even Rama felt it to be good exercise. Inclines of 80° and even more had to be scaled. The ground was for the most part slippery. But all around the stately vistas and charming flowerage and teeming foliage beguiled the hard journey . . .

. . . .

What about the health of Rama who had been ailing? He was all right that day, no disease, no fatigue, no complaint of any kind. No mountaineer can go ahead of him. We went on climbing and climbing till every one of the party felt hungry. By this time we had reached a region where it never rains but snows in gracious bounty.

There was no trace of vegetation of any kind on these bald, bleak heights. There had been a fresh snow-fall before our arrival.

A red blanket was spread on a big slab of stone as a carpet for Rama. Potatoes that had been boiled the night before were given him to eat. The companions took their stale simple food most thankfully.

. . . Just after finishing the meals we were up again. Moving steadily onward and upward we toiled on. One young man fell down exhausted, his lungs and limbs refused to carry him any further; he complained also of giddiness of head. He was left alone there at that time. Proceeding a little further, another companion fell senseless. "My head," he said, "reels and reels." He also was left to himself for the time being. The rest marched on. After a short while a third companion fell off. His nose began to bleed. With two men Rama presses on.

Three beautiful Barars (mountain stags) are seen most excellently flitting past.

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A fourth companion lags behind, and at last lies down on snow-covered stones. No fluid water is visible round about, but a deep gurgling sound is audible from under the stones where the man lies. One Brahman still accompanies Rama, carrying the aforementioned red blanket, a telescope, a pair of green glasses, and a hatchet. The air becomes very thin to breathe. Strange enough, two Garurs flew over our heads here. A tedious slope of old, old snow, of dark bluish colour has to be mounted. The companion begins to cut steps in the slippery snow in order to make it possible to plant our feet thereon. But the ancient glacier is so rigid that the poor man's hatchet breaks down. Then and there we are overtaken by a snow storm. The man's heavy heart is cheered up by Rama with the assurance that Providence wanted to do more good than harm through the snowfall. And so it proves. The threatening snowfall makes it easier for us to trudge along. With the aid of pointed Alpine sticks we mount the slope, and lo! there lie before us fair, flat, extensive fields of dazzling snow, miles upon miles in width. A resplendent floor of silver-snow shining all-round. Joy! Joy! Is it not an ocean of radiant milk, splendid, sublime, wonderful, and wonderful! Rama's joy knows no bounds. He runs on at his full speed on the glaciers at this time, putting on his shoulder the red blanket and wearing canvas shoes.

There is no one in his company now. *The swan of soul flies all alone at last.*[1]

For nearly three miles he walks over the snows. Sometimes the legs get immersed and have to be drawn out not without struggle. At last on a snowy mound, the red blanket is spread, Rama sits on it, all alone, above the noises and turmoils of the world, beyond the fumes and furies of the multitude. Perfect silence reigns here. What a *Shakti* prevails. No sounds of any kind audible except the *Anand ghanghor*. Most blessed serene solitude!

The veil of clouds becomes a little less thick. The rays of the sun sift through the thin clouds and fall on the scene and immediately turn the silver snows

[1] From Urdu.

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into burning gold. Very appropriately has this place been called Sumeroo, or the *Mountain of Gold*.

O ye men of the world, mark it, no purple bloom on a lady's cheek, no bright jewellery or fine ornaments, no superb mansion can ever possess an iota of the transcendent enchantment and fascination of this Sumeroo. And numberless Sumeroos like this you will find within you when once you realise your own real self. All nature shall do you homage "from cloud to cloud, from the blue sky to the green earth, all living creatures therein included from the eagle to the mole". No god shall dare disobey you.

* * * * *

Bhim Tal.

After leaving Tehri.

To-day is finished a pleasant tour, trip, or a short walk of 600 miles over the Uttra Khand hills.

. . . .

It is noon just now. The wide lake of Bhim Tal is ablaze in the golden rays of the shining sun. Young hills veiling their faces by green *shawls* stand wonderingly around.

A small white coloured boat, bearing Rama floats on the broad, smooth un-wrinkled surface of the lake like the crescent moon on the forehead of Mahadeva.

Swami Rama wrote the following letters from the Himalayas when he went up there again after his return from America.

Vashishtha Ashram.

This evening it stopped raining. The clouds, assuming all sorts of fantastic shapes and different degrees of thickness, have somewhat parted in different directions. Light refracted and reflected from them makes the entire scene a blazing sphere of glory. Then the playful children of heaven put on fascinating colours of all varieties. What painter could paint, what observer could note all the passing shades and hues? Look where you will, the eyes are charmed by the orange,

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purple, violet, and pink colours and their indescribable varieties, while between these the ever-welcome blue background is out here and there. The effulgent glory brings on ecstasy, and tears of joy appear in Rama's eyes. The clouds dissolve, but leave a permanent message behind. They brought a cup of nectar from the Lord and went back to Him. Such are in fact all attractive objects. They appear, reflect Rama's glory for a second and dissolve. Insane indeed must he be who falls in love with the passing clouds, and yet folks endeavour to hold fast to the unsteady clouds of seeming things and cry like children on finding them gone. How amusing! O! I cannot suppress a laugh.

Others again expend all their time in minutely observing and faithfully noting down the smallest details of the transitory changes in clouds (phenomena). O me! what are these creatures? There is a flood of glory around them and yet they care not to slake their raging thirst for light. These are what they call scientists and philosophers. Being too busy in splitting hairs they take no notice of the glorious head of the Beloved to which the hair belongs. O! I cannot suppress a laugh. Happy he, whose vision no clouds of names and forms could obstruct, who could always trace the attracting light to its true source, the Atman, and whose affections reach the goal (God) not being lost in the way like streams dried up before reaching the sea. The pleasing relations must vanish. They are only postmen. Miss not the Lord's love-letter they have brought for you. The match-stick must soon burn off, but blessed is he who has lighted his lamp permanently therewith. The steam and food must simply erelong be consumed, but fortunate is the boat which before the fatal loss reaches the Home—the Harbour. He lives who could make of every object whatever a stepping stone to God, or rather a mirror to see God. The world with all its stars, mountains, rivers, kings and scientists, etc., was made for him. Verily it is so, I tell you the truth.

The field and landscape (and therein lies their refreshing charm as contrasted with the sickening smoky streets of cities) excite not in man the sense of limitation

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and they drive him not into the corner (*bodyhood*). Man in their presence, can well occupy the position of a Witness-Light. Inwardly the vegetable kingdom has as much, and perhaps more, of strife and struggle, and unrest, etc., than a civilised human society, but even its struggles become interesting only in so far as a man among the cedars, oaks, and pines easily sees himself not one of them, but keeps himself the Witness-Light unconcerned. He who can live in the busy streets as anybody might move in forests, feeling the Self as a disinterested Witness-Light, not identifying himself with the body, which in this case may be taken as a plant among plants, who could deny that the Universe is a Garden of Eden to him? Such people of God-life are the light of the world. The Light which appears as an unconcerned witness is the very life of all that it witnesses.

The river of life is flowing. None exists but God. Of whom shall I be afraid? All life is my God's life, nothing other, He and Me too is He. The whole world is my own Himalayan woods. When Light dawns, flowers begin to laugh, birds sing, and streams dance with joy! O that Light of lights! The sea of Light is flowing! The breeze of Bliss is blowing!

In this beautiful forest, I laugh and sing, clap hands, and dance.

Did they jeer? It was the blowing of the breeze. Did they sneer? It was the hissing of leaves. Shall I be overshadowed by my own life pulsating in the streams, cedars, birds, and breezes?

* * * * *

The top of Basun—Vashishtha Ashram

The moon is shining, spreading a sea of silvery peace. The moonlight falls full on Rama's straw bed. The shadows of unusually tall, white rose bushes which grow fearlessly free and wild on this mountain, are checkering the moon-lit bed and flickering so playfully as if they were nice little dreams

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of the placid moonlight that sleeps so tranquilly before Rama.

Sleep, my baby sleep!
And smile with rosy dreams!

Jamnotri, Gangotri, Sumeroo, Kedar, and *Badri* glaciers stand so close as if one could reach them by hand. In fact, a semi-circle of glaring diamond peaks like a jeweller's tiara decorates this Vashishtha Ashram. Their white snowy summits are all taking a bath in the milky ocean of moonlight and their deep *Soham* breathings in the form of cool breezes reach here continually.

The snows on this mountain have all melted off, and by this time the vast open field near the top is completely covered with blue, pink, yellow, and white flowers, some of them being very fragrant. People are afraid of coming here, as they believe this place to be the *Garden of Fairies.* This idea saves this pleasure-garden of the Devas from being haunted by the sacrilegious spoilers of nature's beauty. Rama walks over this flower-bed very softly with great caution, lest any tender smiling little flower be injured by ungentle tread.

Cuckoos, doves, and numerous other winged songsters entertain Rama in the morning, sometimes in the mornings a huge dragon fly comes up near the roof of the cave and entertains Rama with his peculiar Persian-wheel-like music. The eagles (royal Garurs) soaring high up, touching the dark clouds at noon—are they not the *Garurs* bearing Vishnoo on their back?

What a fair colony the blooming forest giants form round yonder mountain pond! What bond unites them? They have no connection with each other, no personal relationships. They have a social organisation, as it were, only in so far as they send their roots to the self-same pond. The love of the same water keeps them together. So let us meet in devotion to the same Truth —meet in heaven, in heart, in Rama.

Jagadevi Lawn.

All the caves near the top of the Basun Mountain being engulfed by the rains, Rama had to quit the Garden

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of Fairies at the top. He came down to a most lovely, lofty, level lawn where breezes keep playing all along. Jasmine, white and yellow, grows wild here together with various other sister flowers. Straw-berries, crimson rose-berries are found in ripe plenty. On one side of the newly built hut a neat greensward extends far in gradually ascending slope between two rushing streams. In front is a charming landscape, flowing waters, fresh-foliage-covered hills, undulating forests and fields. Clean smooth slabs of stone on the lawn form the royal tables and seats for Rama. If shade be needed, spreading groves furnish cheerful accommodation.

In three hours a hut was prepared by the shepherds living in the forests. They made it rain-proof to the best of their power. At night a severe rain-storm set in. Every three minutes lightning flashed, followed by rolling thunder at which each time the mountains shook and trembled. This Indra Vajra kept up its continual strokes for over three hours. Water poured madly. The poor hut leaked, its resistance to the storm became so ineffective that an umbrella had to be kept open all the time under the roof to save the books from being drenched. The clothes became all wet. The ground being grass covered could not turn muddy, yet it was drinking to its full the water drops drizzling continuously from the roof. Rama is enjoying very nearly the "fish" and the "tortoise" life. This experience of the aquatic life for the night brings joy of its own.

Count one night less from the full span of your life and sleep not at all.

Blessed is the storm to keep us up in the Lord's company.[1]

"Not for any price could I, O Mountain-mover, give Thee up, not for a thousand, Thunderer! nor ten thousand, nor hundred times that, O Lord of countless bounty!"[2]

[1] Translated from the Persian.

[2] Translated from Sanskrit.

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Whether, O *Shukra* (Almighty) thou be far (in roaring clouds), or, O *Vritra-slayer* (*i.e.*, doubt-destroyer), near at hand (in blowing winds); here, heaven penetrating *songs* (piercing prayers) are being sent as long-maned steeds for thee to (ride on and) come sharp to one who has pressed out the juice (of his existence) for thee. Come, sit in my heart and drink of the wine of my life (Soma).[1]

Man is not meant to waste all his time in petty fears and cautions; how shall I live and oh! what shall become of me, and all such foolish nonsense. He ought to have at least as much self-respect as fishes and birds and even trees have. They grumble not at storm or sunshine, but live as one with nature. My Atman, I myself am the pouring rain. I flash. I thunder. How beautifully awful and strong I am. *Sivoham* songs gush forth from the heart.

No day or night passes without bringing a heavy shower of rain. And as described in the first sloka of Kalidas quoted above, Rama is often caught by showers in his daily climbs up the hill. But there being no caves in the near neighbourhood he has to take the very clouds for his umbrella and to enjoy the showers as his.

Happy the cedars and pines as described in the second sloka, which though quivering and shivering offer their bodies as a target for the cool showers of the Ganges spray.

O the good fortune to bare our bosom before raging coolness, stormy grace!

SAHS TARU TAL,

July, 1906.

To travel on almost heaven-high ridges for miles and miles, viewing the waving forests of birch and juniper spreading far below, flowery precipices lying on the right as well as on the left; to walk bare-footed on extensive

[1] Translated from Sanskrit: Swami Rama's interpretation.

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fields covered with soft velvety grass where loving dainty flowers cling to your feet getting entangled in the toes; to enjoy the silvery sights of the rushing waterfalls on distant Kailas cliffs; to watch clever little musk deer springing at lightning speed before you—well might the moon ride such a beautiful runner; to be startled now and then by *Garuras* (royal eagles) fluttering their large painted wings now on this side, now on the other; to stoop to pick every now and then Kailas lotuses *Brahma Kanwal* which in their lovely petals combine gold and fragrance; to be amused at the coolies outdoing each other in digging *Masi*, *Lesar*, *Guggal*, the different kinds of incense which abound here in charming plenty; and to sing hymns and chant OM, engaged our time. Far, far above the din and bustle of worldly life; deep and vast blue lakes in their crystalline expanse, rippling under the pure and free Kailas air, surrounded by chaste, virgin snows hold a mirror up to the very face of the blooming, blushing Sun. In such lofty solitude serenely does the Sun enjoy his charming glory. On such heights, no hamlet or hut could be expected; nights were passed in caves where breezes sleep.

O! the joy of leaving behind the prosaic plains of parching body-consciousness! O! the joy of mingling with the sun and breezes! O! the joy of roaming in the heavenly infinite forest deeps of *Ekamevâdvitiyam* (One without a second).

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CHAPTER X

RESUME OF HIS EARLY LIFE

SWAMI RAMA fled away from his house, thereby offending his father, to join one of the colleges at Lahore for higher University education as we have in India. For one full year, he did not return to his village Muraliwala. And in this heroic escape and endeavour, he was helped by his maternal uncle Raghunath Mal and his quaint philosopher-friend Dhanna Mal of Gujranwala. In the second year of his college life, he wrote to his uncle: "My greatest need is a solitary place to study and my greatest want is time. O God! let there never be any dearth of the three things for me (i) solitude, (ii) time, and (iii) will to acquire knowledge. O uncle! This is my inmost desire, the rest is known to God."

He passed the Intermediate examination, standing first in the Province, in 1890.

A little later, his father, impatient of his settling in life, and wild with his resolution to go up for still higher education came and left his wife at Lahore with him, and declined all help in supporting this ardent student. Swami Rama had been married at the village *Viroki*, when he was quite a small boy.

He passed his degree examination in 1893, on his second chance, his first chance having been lost by a slip of the University Regulations.

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It is said in this examination, the examiner had set thirteen problems and given a note to the candidates to attempt any nine. Swami Rama did all the thirteen with a note to the examiner that he may examine any nine.

He wrote to his father "Your son stands first in the Province and gets Rs. 60 as scholarship. This is due to divine help. Such results are not the outcome of any personal efforts."

At the same time, he writes to his true patron, his maternal uncle: "I will get two scholarships, one for Rs. 25 and one of Rs. 35 per month. This is all God's Favour."

He joined the Government College, Lahore, for his M.A. in Mathematics. It was in May, 1893, when he was 19½ years of age. He applied for the State Scholarship to go to England to compete for the Blue Ribbon in Mathematics, but some one else got the scholarship. Later in his life he told me "Rama thought of becoming a senior wrangler, but if this body did not, another Indian (meaning Mr. Paranjpye) won it. It is thus that the desires of a desireless person are fulfilled."

He writes on 18th February, 1894: "There is nothing in the world on which one could depend. They are blessed by God who put their faith in Him alone. They are the True Saints. At the feet of such holy men, the world with all its paraphernalia crouches in entire submission."

While in the Government College, he began living on milk diet alone, gave up wheaten bread but

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Swami Rama while Professor

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occasionally indulged in boiled rice. His fare was very simple and light, and his dress still simpler. He always wore coarse and cheap Khaddar.

In 1895, he took up a job of school master and went to Sialkot and took up his appointment as second master, in the Mission High School. It is here that he had to borrow a paltry sum of Rs. 10 from a friend, who readily lent it to him. As long as he was at Sialkot, he paid every month Rs. 10 to his benefactor.

From Sialkot he writes to his uncle thus: "The Sanatan Dharma Sabha of Sialkot has got some new life from my presence. I get intoxicated after I do my little work for them. Before this intoxication, the very kingdoms seem valueless. All people both Indians and English are quite contented with me and all are kind."

In 1896, he became the Superintendent of the hostel as he writes to Dhanna Mal: "The Mussalman Superintendent of the Boarding house did a wrong thing in getting beef cooked in the premises and this gave a deliberate offence to the Hindu students. He is sent away and I am to take his place."

In 1896, he was called to take the chair of Mathematics in the Mission College, Lahore.

He always went to the Hills and spent his long Summer holidays in Kashmir and at Amarnath. He would often go to Hardwar and Rishikesh and spend his time in utter solitude. After some time, he gave up this Professorship, as its onerous duties were

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incompatible with his desire for a life of contemplation and communion with nature. He then took up the Readership in the Oriental College which meant only 2 hours' work a day, and gave him the sufficient leisure and detachment that he desired.

In 1898, he started his quaint periodical 'Aliph' (the letter A of Persian) and called his press, "*Ananda* Press" or *Bliss* Press. And in 1900, in the month of July, he left Lahore for the woods of the Himalayas for good.

His friends and admirers gathered in number on the platform of the Lahore Railway Station, and as Swami Rama stood ready to depart from them they sang an Urdu Gazal of adieu composed by him.

Adieu! my Mathematics, adieu!
Adieu my Ravi! adieu!
Farewell my wife, farewell!
Farewell my children, farewell!
Adieu O Friends, O foes, adieu!
Adieu books and teachings all, adieu!
Adieu my heart! Adieu my God!
Lo! God! Adieu! Adieu! Adieu!

O friends I am lost to my country.[1]
And my country is lost to me,
Thenceforth I live in forests,
Away from all, in His Love!

Early in 1901, after the year's sojourn in the hills, he turned a monk, and donned the orange robe.

In August, 1901, he took a long trip and visited Gangotri, Jamnotri, Kedarnath and Badri Narayan

[1] In Aliph, the thought of his country comes exactly as in this poem, but he thinks of her always.

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living on the pure bosom of the Himalayan snows in continuous rapture.

After visiting Badri Narayan, Swami Rama got down to Muttra in 1901, where he presided over two sessions of a miniature kind of Parliament of Religions organised by Swami Shiv Guna Acharya.

In 1902, he left for Japan. And after 2 years' residence in the United States, he returned to India on 8th December, 1904.

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CHAPTER XI

SWAMI RAMA TIRATH IN JAPAN

THE Parliament of Religions held in 1893, in Chicago discovered many eminent men of the world, the most famous from the East being Swami Vivekananda of Calcutta, Mr. Anagarika Dharmapala of Ceylon, Mr. Kanzo Hirai and Mr. Zenshiro Noguchi of Japan. Its next sitting was eagerly looked forward by the Religious leaders of the whole world, though, unfortunately, no other session of this Parliament could have been arranged on that International basis.

An announcement was made in India by some of the Bengali friends of the late Mr. Okakura of Japan to hold the next session of a similar International Parliament in Tokyo. Perhaps this announcement was made prematurely. Mr. Okakura, then, was on a flying visit to India, he might have expressed his wish to the late revered Sister Nivedita and probably wanted to arrange for it on his return. But Mr. Okakura was still in Calcutta, when the news reached the Tokyo Press which stood against the proposal, and unsupported as it was by the presence of Mr. Okakura himself in Japan, the proposal was born dead.

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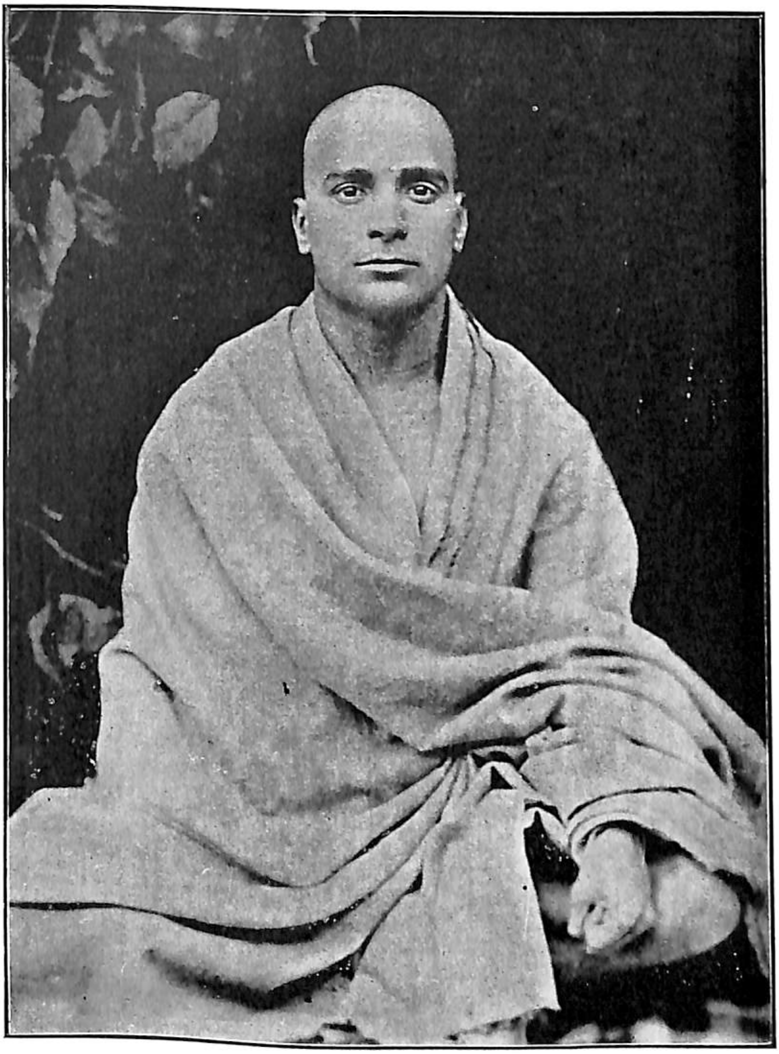

Swami Rama on return from the glaciers of the Himalayan solitudes

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Swami Rama Tirath in those days, was living in the neighbourhood of Tehri Garhwal. His days and nights passed in incessant thought. He lived in the wild, unrestrained, joys of Vedantic consciousness. Most of his poems were composed in those days, and the greatest poem was he himself.

His words were few, but all those that met him found with him the fragrance of God. His eyes sparkled with the pure luminosity of thought, his face glowed with the snowy lustre of a highly sublimated emotion. He would touch the grass of the ground under his feet with many endearing terms. He called the river Ganges, as "my Gangi". He had given pet names to his papers, pencils, pens and he lived in the society of his own creation.

Joys came to him in crowds, attracted by his tremulous sweetness of soul, and whenever they asked him to be alone with them, he would fly like a stag from all work, and scale the glaciers, run into the Himalayan caves, and go bathing in the rivers, and running on the roads at dark nights, facing danger and death as a mere physical exercise, for their sake. His joys were celestial persons to him. Their company was to him all alluring. Many times people found him semi-conscious with joy, having laid himself down unnoticed in a neglected cave for days without food or drink.

He would sit on the banks of the Ganges and tears of joy would stream out of him, and he loved to say the three rivers, two of his eyes and one of the eye of Heaven, came and mingled there at Tehri!

16

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Men might go to him but he would no more go to men. The then Maharaja of Tehri was a great devotee of his, and he would, by his laughter and the sunshine of his poetic poverty, make the ceremonious occasion of his meeting with the Raja as simple as that of seeing a fine horse. Much of his time of about three years in the Himalayas, after leaving Lahore, was spent on the naked bosom of Nature, and so great was the growth of his intimacy with her that when he went to the plains, he was thoroughly imbued with that mystic secret in full confidence of which he used to declare, that the very elements were his friends, and Nature much too willing to run his behests. "It is all my body, the rivers are my arteries, the mountains my bones. As my hand goes of itself to scratch any part of my body, so Nature comes to my help to fulfil the needs of my soul. The snow storm on the heights of the Himalayas, a sure death for others, spreads for me only a soft white velvet making stepping on it so easy. It is a sacrilege to walk on the rocks with any socks or shoes on. The touch of the bare ground inspires omniscience in the bare foot, my flesh and the flesh of the rocks must touch each other fully to know each other fully. We talk and understand each other heart to heart and our love goes silently all underground from breast to breast. Man is God only if he drops his dotted 'i' and washes it in the flowing Ganges. Man is God if joy flows from him to Heaven, blessed by Heaven in a reflex current back. I am Siva, the Malabar and Coromandel are my two legs, the

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deserts of Rajputana my breast, the Vindhyachals are my loins, and I spread my arms to the West and to the East. The Himalayas are my tressed head, and in my curls winds the pure silver Ganga. I am India. I am Man, I am bird, beast, I am God." This was his language. In his language there was the rain of his tears along with the sunshine of his loud laughter, in this fell the snows of calm serene contemplation, and in this prevailed the sadness of dry autumn leaves falling, falling as the winds carried them hither and thither listlessly. "They do not see the pain of continuous labour that my roots undergo in toiling for the joy of the spring burst of my flowers. The world wishes only to share my joy, the world knows not my travails," said he.

He had a message to give, he had joys to share with the whole world. His passion for Truth was throbbing with the infinite restlessness of a missionary.

He was in terrible earnestness as an apostle of what he called Vedanta. His Vedanta was, however, no more a Vedanta than the prayer of a Moslem is, or the devotion of a Bhagavata is, or the fervour of a martyr is, or the impulse of a patriot hero is, or the poetry of Shelley is, or the philosophy of Spinoza or Shams Tabrez, or the song of a woman in love, is Vedanta. But what was collecting in him till then, was already breaking the thin crust and bursting into songs and essays. His autobiography of this period is contained fully in the first five issues of his periodical publication

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entitled Aliph—denoting that the first letter of the Alphabet was too much for him to learn and he did need go no further.

The Raja of Tehri came to the Swami with the news that there was to be a Parliament of Religions, a world-meeting to be held in Tokyo, just as they had one in 1893, in Chicago. It was in 1902. And the Raja said that according to the dates given, the Swami could reach Tokyo in time, if he were to start immediately and catch the first steamer going Eastward. Swami got ready and in about a week's time he was on board bound for Japan.

He was met at various intervening ports by the Hindu merchants and he was the guest of Messrs. Wassiamall Assomall at Yokohama for a day on his arrival in Japan. The following day with a companion from the said firm he arrived at Tokyo, and entered the house known as the Indo-Japanese club of which I was then the Secretary, and lived with other Indian students as a resident-member of the club. The club has now been reorganised into the Indo-Japanese society with much more weightier functions.

As the man from Yokohama introduced two orange-robed monks into the club, a thrill of joy went round and most enchanting was the effect of the bird-like warbling of 'OM, OM!' by the elder of the two Swamis. Swami Rama was accompanied by his disciple Swami Narayan. I had gone almost mad with enthusiasm though I knew neither of them. Their language was all so strange and their

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Puransingh

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glow all so spiritual that it commanded silent obeisance.

As the younger Swami asked me, "Where is your country?" I replied with tears in my eyes in soft, loving accent, "The world is my country."

And the elder Swami looked up into my eyes and said, "To do good is my religion."

Thus we met each other in two sentences.

I had to go to lecture to a large audience in the Buddhist University that day, and I invited the Swami to go and speak to the people that very day of his arrival. He agreed. We all got into the Tram car. And I threw my head back against the shut glass window and recited, forgetting where I was, the sweet syllable OM, in a sing-song music of my heart. I had made no other preparations for my lecture. I went and rose and spoke and thrilled the audience. I introduced Swami Rama who spoke shedding, as it were, sparks of fire. There were Buddhists and Theosophists come from Australia, and they all listened to him and with him on the same platform spoke Mr. Kanzo Uchimura, the Carlyle of Japan.

It was late in the evening when we came back and he said, "I want a person of your type, who prepared his splendid speech in absolute rest of his mind while whirling through the Tokyo street, in the noisiest Ganza street of Tokyo. Yes. This rest is the secret of life. This is concentration of mind, this is lyrical silence, from where all great ideas come, all dreams that have led humanity onward in

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its progress are dreamt here, all flashes of inspiration float before the human mind in this region of ecstasy. It is natural relaxation of body into complete mental rest, this is the Vedantin's *Yoga*. This is a great thing," said he very enthusiastically. I heard nothing, for I was agitated with the joy of a young woman that falls for the first time in love with the man of her dreams. I was much too vibratory to have any patience for listening to him. I would run to and fro. I would go out of his room aimlessly and come back aimlessly. I neither could stay with him for long, nor could stay away from him by any means at my command. I loved him, I liked him, and if I were a girl, I would have given anything to win him. But one thing is certain that I heard not a syllable of what he said, yet every word that fell from him was treasured by my mind, and whatever I am producing even now is true in its every syllable.

* * * * *

The next day I brought from an old book shop the two bulky volumes of the proceedings and papers of the Parliament of Religions of 1893, and I came and placed it on his table.

"Ah! exactly! Rama wanted just this book. How did you get this? Nature with her own hands puts everything that is required in his way."

We had then a long talk on the Parliament of Religions to be held in Tokyo. When the Swami found that there was no such meeting, he laughed heartily and said, "With what a beautiful trick,

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Nature has led Rama out into the world from his lonely Himalayan resort. How a false piece of news becomes so fertile! Rama in himself is a whole Parliament of Religions. If Tokyo is not having one, let it not; Rama will hold one."

The very next day of his arrival, Professor Chhatre of Poona was giving the first performance of his circus in Tokyo and all the Indian students and Swami Rama went together to see it. It was here that Professor Takakutsu, the great Orientalist and the Sanskrit professor of Tokyo Imperial University met Rama, and while going home remarked to me, "I have met many Pandits and Philosophers at the house of Professor Max Muller in England and other places, but I have never seen a personality like Swami Rama, who is so living and so significant an illustration of his whole philosophy. But in him Vedanta and Buddhism meet. He is true religion. He is a true poet and philosopher."

Mr. K. Hirai also saw him there and admired his transcendentalism which, he remarked, had made his very flesh transcendental.

While I sat by him seeing the performance in the second row, before us, there was a whole row of Japanese ladies of aristocracy, in their picturesque Kimonos and their gorgeous *obis*, in their superb head-dressing, and a whole row of their snowy necks! I stole a glance at this picture of living beauty, and I half thought in my mind what the Swami would say if the thieves of my eyes were caught red-handed!

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"Puranji! how this row of necks looks like the silver threads of so many Gangas flowing out of the black tressy rocks!" he remarked, as if he supported the poetic theft of my eyes.

When we came out, it was very late at night and we could get neither a rickshaw nor a tram-car. Swami started on foot and we followed. He was a great swift walker and hardly could we all keep pace with him.

Every evening, people gathered round him, the Indians and the Japanese, and listened with rapt attention to what he said; only I sat in wild fervour with my eyes closed and my lips vibrating with OM, listening to nothing and listening to all.

He delivered a great lecture on "The Secret of Success" in the Tokyo College of Commerce and its wonderful glow attracted great attention.[1] The Russian Ambassador, having seen it reported in the papers, wrote for an interview but the Swami had gone on to San Francisco.

"I landed in Japan singing *Purnamadah, Purnamidam* and I go singing *Purnamadah, Purnamidam* etc."—a Sanskrit verse meaning "the Infinite is that, the Infinite is this and on and on unchanged is the Infinite." Thus he made, at that particular time, in an affectionate way, a kind reference to my name. "I came not for the Parliament of Religions, but to guide Puran," He said. And I forthwith became a clean shaved monk in love of him, and not of any thing he taught, for I understood then nothing of

[1] The lecture is reproduced below.

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Puransingh as a monk

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that and I am not sure I understand everything now.

About two months after his departure to America, I was photographed at Tokyo, and many friends remarked that I had, so to say, absorbed his very features into mine. And one or two speeches I made and were reported in the papers contained the same thoughts and even, at many places, the very phrases, which were met with in his speeches in America. I spoke later on, at many places, in India and I sent him typed copies of my speeches, and he saw his secret thoughts already forestalled by me.

He told me he had heard in India that the Japanese make a walking stick which can be turned into a stool and an umbrella. I was surprised, as I had never seen this wonder. I took him to the Park Kankoba (the Japanese Bazar) and enquired about it, and we got there the very thing he wanted. He was delighted with it as a child with his toy for hours. He would laugh and make it into a stool, then into an umbrella, then walk akimbo folding it up as a stick. While marketing in the Kankoba, all the girls standing on the different stalls came streaming after him as he passed from one end to the other. Every one of them left their stall and followed him. They touched his garment, they eagerly gazed at him and they said "He is more beautiful than ourselves." They told me in Japanese which Swami did not understand, "How funny! Every one of us wishes to marry this beautiful

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man!" They giggled and cracked jokes and played with him. He stood a bit handicapped, being ignorant of their language. He asked me what they said and I deliberately misinterpreted them. I only said: "They desire to hear you speak on Vedanta and they wish to come to you to learn it and attend your classes." He bowed and said: "Tell them they are always welcome, Rama is as much theirs as of any one else."

He was for about a fortnight in Tokyo and then left for America in the ship which Professor Chhatre of Poona had chartered to convey his circus.

The Secret of Success

Following is the lecture that Swami Rama delivered on "The Secret of Success" at Tokyo.

Does it not appear strange for a stranger from India to speak on a subject which is evidently more intelligently grasped by Japan than India? It may be. But I stand here before you as a teacher for reasons more than one.

To carry out skilfully an idea into practice is one thing, but to grasp its fundamental meaning is quite another thing. Even though a nation may be prospering by acting up to certain general principles to-day, there is every danger of its downfall if those principles are not clearly understood by the national mind and distinctly supported by sound theory. A labourer who successfully performs a chemical operation is not a chemist, because his work is not supplemented by theory. A fireman who successfully operates a steam engine is not an engineer because his labour is simply mechanical. Read about the doctor who used to heal wounds by keeping the diseased part under linen bandage for a full week

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and touching it daily with a sword. The wounds were healed being kept from exposure by the bandage. But he ascribed the wonderful healing property to the touch of the sword. So thought the patients too. This superstitious theory gave birth to failures upon failures in many cases that required some other treatment than mere bandaging. Hence it is absolutely necessary that right precept and right practice should go hand-in-hand.

Secondly, I regard Japan as my country and her people as my countrymen. I can prove on reasonable grounds that in the beginning, your ancestors migrated from India. Your ancestors are my ancestors. Hence I come to shake hands with you as your brother and not as a stranger. I have another ground which equally entitles me to this privilege. I am a Japanese from my very birth in regard to my temper, manners, habits, and sympathies. With these forewords, let me come to the subject.

The secret of success is an open secret. Every body has got something to say on the subject, and perhaps you have often heard its general principles enunciated, but the vital importance of the subject justifies any amount of emphasis driving it home into the minds of people.

1. *Principle of Success—Work*

At the outset, let us put this question to Nature around us. All the "books in running brooks and sermons in stones" preach with unmistakeable accent the gospel of continuous, incessant work. Light bestows upon us the power of sight. Light gives a mainspring to all beings. Let us see what light is thrown on the question by Light itself. I will take for illustration the ordinary light—the lamp. The underlying secret of a lamp's lustre and splendour is that it spares not its wick and oil. The wick and oil or the little self is being constantly consumed and glory is the natural consequence. There it is, the lamp says, spare yourself and you will be immediately extinguished. If you seek ease and comfort for your bodies, waste your time in sensual

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pleasures and luxury, there is no hope for you. Inactivity, in other words, would bring to you death and activity and activity alone is life. Look at the stagnant pond and the running stream. The crystal water of the running river is ever fresh, clear drinkable and attractive. But, on the other hand, see how disgusting, odorous, filthy, dirty and stinking, is the water of the stagnant pond. If you wish to succeed, follow the line of action, the constant motion of a river. There is no hope for a man who would waste his wick and oil in preserving it from consumption. Follow the policy of a river, ever progressing, ever assimilating, ever adapting itself to the environment and ever performing work. Work, work, incessant work, is the first principle of success. "From good to better daily self-surpassed." If you work on this principle, you will see that it is as easy to be great as to be small.

2. *Self-Sacrifice*

Everybody loves white objects. Let us examine the cause of their being the objects of universal Love. Let us account for the success of the white. The black objects are everywhere hated, discarded and rejected, and let us take this fact as it is and account for it. Physics tells us the reality of the phenomenon of colour. Red is not red, green is not green, black is not black, and all is not what seems. The red rose gets its lovely colour by reflecting or throwing back that colour. The other colours in the Sun's rays are entirely absorbed by the rose and nobody attributes those colours to the rose. The green leaf absorbs all other colours in light and appears fresh and green by the very colour which it denies to itself and throws back. Black objects have the property of absorbing all and reflecting no light. They have no spirit of sacrifice in them and no charity. They do not renounce even a single ray. They do not throw back even an iota of what they receive. Nature tells you that black, black like *coal*, shall he appear who refuses to give unto his neighbours what he receives. The way to receive is to give. The secret of appearing white is total renunciation—to throw back instantaneously on your neighbours all that you receive.

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Acquire this virtue of white objects and you must be successful. What do I mean by white? European? Not European alone, the white mirror, the white pearl, the white dove, the white snow, all the emblems of purity and righteousness stand as your great teachers. Imbibe, therefore, the spirit of sacrifice and reflect unto others all that you receive. Have no recourse to selfish absorption and you must be white. A seed in order that it may bud forth into a tree must perish itself. Fruition is thus the final result of complete self-sacrifice. All teachers will bear me out in the statement that the more we impart the light of knowledge, the more we receive.

3. *Self-forgetfulness*

Students know that when they are speaking in their literary societies, the moment the idea, "I lecture" comes into prominence within their mind the speech is marred. Forget your little self in work and entirely throw yourself into it; you will succeed. If you are thinking, become thought itself, you shall succeed. If you are working, become work itself, and thus you shall succeed.

When shall I be free?
When 'I' shall cease to be.

Here is a story of two Indian Rajputs who went to Akbar, the great Moghul emperor of India, and sought employment. Akbar enquired about their qualifications. They said they were heroes. Akbar asked them to prove their statement. Both drew their daggers from the scabbards. There the two lightning flashes shone in Akbar's court. The flashes of the dagger were symbolic of their inner heroism. Immediately the two lightning flashes joined the two bodies. Each kept the point of his dagger on the other's breast, and both gave proofs of their heroism by running each other through with stoic calmness. The bodies fell, spirits met and they were proved heroes. I do not point to the story which is shocking in this advanced age, but to the moral it teaches. The moral is, sacrifice your little self, and success must be yours. It cannot be otherwise. Cannot I say, the desire for success must die in your work before achieving success?

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4. *Universal Love*

Love is another principle of success. Love and be loved, that is the goal. The hand in order to live must love all the members of the body. If it isolates itself and thinks 'why should the whole body profit by my earnings,' there is no help for the hand, it must die. For, in order to be consistent in its selfishness, the hand should not put into the mouth the meat and drink that were secured by dint of the hand's labour alone whether with the pen or with the sword, etc., and should rather inject into its own skin all sorts of nourishing food, thus excluding the other organs from sharing the fruits of its labour. True, this injection or the sting of a wasp or bee may make the hand swell, but all that swelling does more harm than good. Swelling is not improving and the sore hand is sure to die by its selfishness. The hand can flourish only when it realises in practice the identity of its self with the Self of all other organs of the body and does not alienate its own good from the good of the whole.

Co-operation is nothing but the superficial manifestation of Love. You hear so much about the utility of co-operation that I need hardly enlarge upon it. Let that co-operation proceed from your innate love. Be love and you are successful. A merchant who does not look upon his customer's interests as his own, cannot succeed. In order to prosper he must love his customers. He is to observe them with his whole heart.

5. *Cheerfulness*

Another factor that plays an important part is Cheerfulness. You, my brothers, are cheerful, by nature. I rejoice to see the smiles on your blooming faces. You are the smiling flowers. You are the laughing buds of humanity. You are the personification of cheerfulness. So what I wish to point to you is to keep up this feature of your life till the end of time. Now let us see how it can be preserved.

Be not anxious as to the reward of your labours, mind not the future, have no scruples, think not of success and failure. Work for Work's sake. Work is

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its own reward. Without dejection at the past and without anxiety as to the future—work, work, work in the living present. This spirit will keep you cheerful under all circumstances. To a living seed must be attracted by an inviolable law of affinity all that it requires of the air, water, earth, etc., to fructify. So does Nature promise every kind of help to a cheerful active worker. "The way to more light is the faithful use of what we have." If on a dark night you are to travel a distance of twenty miles and the light in your hand shows only up to ten feet, think not of the whole way being unilluminated. You will not find a spot in the dark. So a real, earnest worker by a necessary Law encounters no obscure ground in his course. Why then damp our cheerful spirits by uneasiness about the event? Falling suddenly into a lake, persons who do not know how to swim, can save themselves by simply preserving their equanimity. The specific gravity of man being less than that of water, he will keep floating on the surface. But ordinary human beings lose their balance of mind and by their very struggle to float get drowned. So, oftentimes the very unrest for the future success causes failure.

Let us see the nature of thought which clings to the future and runs after success. It is like this. A man goes to catch his own shadow. Let him run till the end of time, never, never will he be able to catch it. But let him turn his back upon the shadow and face the sun, then Lo! the same shadow begins to run after him. The moment you turn your back upon success, the moment you cease to think of the consequences, the moment you concentrate your energy in your present duty, the same instant success is with you, nay dogging you. Hence follow not success, make not success your goal, then and then only success will seek you. In a court of justice the magistrate need not invite the parties, the lawyers and the orderlies, etc., to make his court, but let the magistrate sit himself and the whole pageant of itself begins before him. So it is, dear friends! work at your own duty in profound cheerfulness and all that you require for success will lay itself at your feet.

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6. *Fearlessness*

The next point that I will urge upon your attention and will exhort you to verify by your own experience is *Fearlessness*. Lions may be tamed by a single glance, enemies may be pacified by a single look, victory may be won by a single dash of fearlessness. I have roamed in the dense valleys of the Himalayas. I have met tigers, bears, wolves, and venomous animals. No harm was done to me. The wild beasts were looked straight in the face, glances met, the fierce animals were outstared and the so-called terrible creatures sulked away. Thus it is, be fearless and none can harm you.

Perhaps you have seen how a pigeon in the sight of a cat shuts his eyes perhaps thinking that the cat does not see him, because he does not see the cat. What happens? The cat pounces upon the pigeon and the pigeon is devoured up. Even a tiger is tamed by fearlessness, and even a cat eats up him who fears.

You might have seen how a trembling hand can never successfully pour a liquid from one vessel into another. It is sure to be spilt. But how easily the steady, fearless hand can handle the dear liquid without spilling a drop. There is Nature once again teaching you in unsurpassed eloquence.

Once a Punjabee sepoy was down with some fell disease on boardship, and the doctor passed his capital sentence of throwing him overboard. Doctors! these doctors sometimes pass capital sentences. The sepoy came to know of it. There are flashes of fearlessness even in ordinary beings when brought to bay. He sprang up with unbounded energy and became fearless. He went straight to the doctor and pointing his pistol towards him said: "Am I ill? Do you say so? I will shoot you." The doctor immediately gave him a certificate of health. Despair is weakness, avoid it. The whole strength comes from fearlessness. Mark my words, Fearlessness. Be fearless.

7. *Self-Reliance*

Last but not least, nay the vital principle or the very key-note of success is self-reliance, self-dependence.

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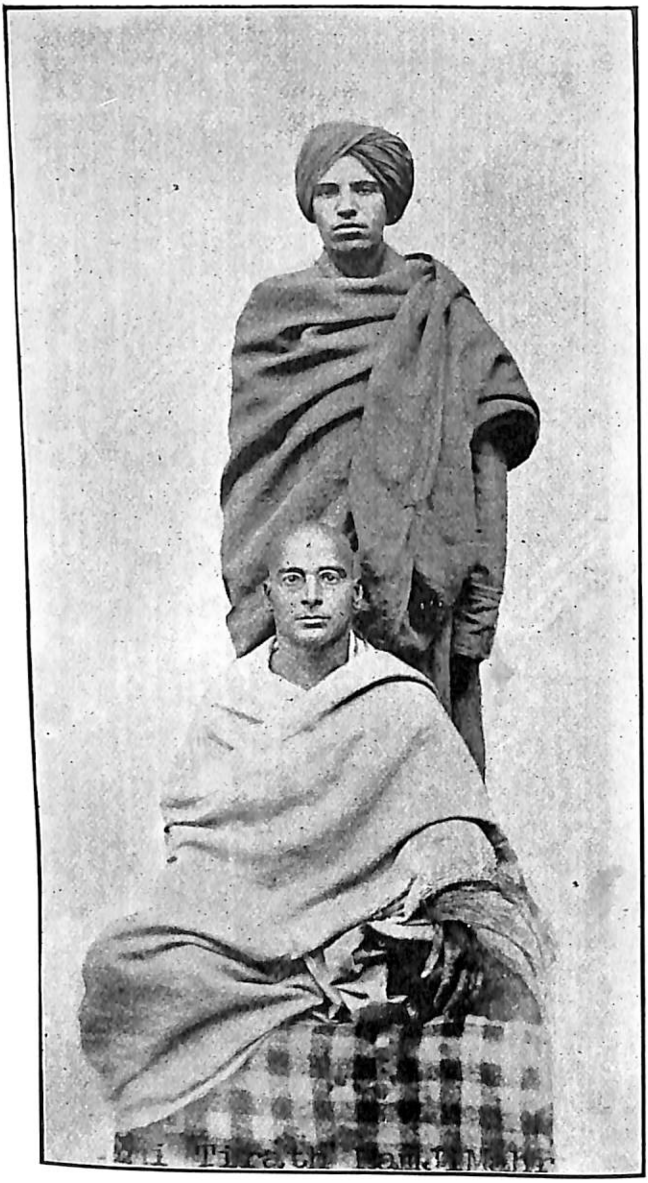

Swami Rama with his disciple Swami Narayana

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If anybody asks me to give my philosophy in one word, I would say "Self-Reliance" the knowledge of self. Hear, O man! Know thyself. True, literally true it is when you help yourself, God must help you. Heaven is bound to help you. It can be proved, it can be realised that your very Self is God—the Infinite, the Omnipotent. Here is a reality, a truth, waiting to be verified by experiment. Verily, verily, depend upon yourself and you can achieve anything. Nothing is impossible before you.

The lion is the king of the forest. He depends upon his own self. He is bold, strong, and the conqueror of all difficulties, because he is in himself. Elephants which when first seen in India were aptly called by the Greeks "moving mountains," are always afraid of their enemies. They always live in groups and employ sentinels to keep watch over them when they sleep, and none of them relies on himself or his own capabilities. They regard themselves to be weak and the whole group of elephants is bewildered—whereas a single elephant, the moving mountain, may trample scores of lions to death under his feet.

A highly instructive story is told of two brothers who shared their inherited property equally, but after some years one was reduced to indigence and the other multiplied his fortune by tens. The answer to the question "Why and how" put to the one who became a millionaire was that his brother always said, "Go, go," while he himself always said, "Come, come." The meaning is that one used to order his servants "Go, go, and do this," while he himself was always lying on his feather-stuffed cushions, and the other was always on his feet and in his work, and called his servants for help, "Come, come, and do this." One depended upon his own power and the servants and the riches multiplied; the other ordered his servants, "Go, go." They went away, but fortune also obeyed his command "Go, go," and thus he was left alone. Rama says, "Come, come, and share my success and happiness." So it is, brothers, friends and countrymen! Man is the master of his own destiny. If the people of Japan give me more opportunities to convey my thoughts to them, it can be

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shown that there is no rational ground whatsoever for putting faith in myths and fables and placing our centre outside of ourselves. Even a free man may be a slave because he is free. Out of freedom we are prosperous, out of our own freedom we are enslaved. Then why should we grumble and croak, and why not make use of our real freedom to free ourselves physically and socially?

The religion that Rama brings to Japan is virtually the same as was brought centuries ago by Buddha's followers, but the same religion requires to be dealt with from an entirely different standpoint to suit the needs of the present age. It requires to be blazoned forth in the light of Western Science and philosophy. The essential and fundamental doctrines of my religion may be put in the words of Goethe—

> "I tell you what's man's supreme vocation,
> Before Me was no world, 'tis My creation.
> 'T was I who raised the sun from out the sea
> The Moon began her changeful course with Me."

Realise that once and you are free this moment. Realise that once and you are ever successful. Realise that once and the very dingy dungeons are converted on the spot into blessed *Elysium.*

———

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Dr. HILLER

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CHAPTER XII

SWAMI RAMA TIRATH IN AMERICA

. . . In this part of the country, there are many persons who lovingly cherish the memory of Swami Rama Tirath, and tell how he lived like a true ascetic and won the hearts of the rude villagers in the mountain valleys of California, how he used to throw into the sea the laudatory comments on his lectures that appeared in the local press, how he insisted on charging no admission fees for his lectures and said to a well-to-do friend who complained that the expenses of holding the meetings could not be met on that plan, 'Surely you can pay the expenses of holding the meetings.' He was the greatest Hindu who ever came to America, a real Saint and sage, whose life mirrored the highest principles of Hindu spirituality as his soul reflected the love of the 'Universal spirit' whom he tried to realise.

[Lala Hardayal, M.A., writing from America in *The Modern Review*, July, 1911.]

WHEN Swami Rama was staying at the Shasta Springs he used to work as a common labourer, cutting wood from the mountains and adding it to the home supplies of his host Dr. Hiller. He told me, "Rama had to work hard in Shasta, for he did not like to live in a country like America without his share of physical labour. Rama loved his solitude. And Rama was the first to climb the peak of

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the Shasta Mountain starting with many American competitors, though he declined to accept the first prize that was offered him. The copies of the magazine that gave the account of his ascent were sold so rapidly that it was considered a phenomenal sale. Rama ran a Marathon race, ran out of the mere love of running, it was a race of 30 miles and Rama came first." And it may be noted here that there was a time when he was in Lahore, as a student and a Professor, when fears of complete breakdown of his health were entertained. He was an extremely weak youth, almost a physical wreck, and he had built up his health by sheer force of his will.

* * * * *

Rama had a hammock put up for himself across the rapids of the Shasta river, and there he sat cooing in tune with "his birdies"—as he said "feeling happier than the President of all the United States". Now and then he came out of his mountain solitudes to deliver lectures on Vedanta. He also spoke for India. He made an appeal to Americans on behalf of India, which at the time attracted great attention.

"Dr. Hiller and his wife," he told me, "were very kind hosts, but being an old couple they had to be humoured by Rama. They liked Rama and wished him to stay with them forever."

* * * * *

He told me: "There once came a very rich lady whom Rama named as Ganga. She offered her everything to Rama—her wealth, land, home, and

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offered herself for taking up the robe of Sanyas. But Rama needed nothing. She had a very large heart. God bless her. A great woman."

* * * * *

"But do you think Swamiji, America is more after what you call Vedanta than India?" asked I.

And the Swami replied: "No! America lives my Vedanta on the physical plane, Rama wants all nations to take the same Truth on the mental and spiritual planes also. America and the whole West thus live cramped up inspite of all expansions, while India having cramped herself for centuries only on the mental plane has grown a worse sickman than any Western country. India has shut herself from the spiritual, and has only left half a plank of her door open for the physical life and her ruin has been complete on the mental plane also. Vedanta is the whole Truth, it kills if the whole of it is not lived. Either the whole of Truth, or death, there is no golden mean to be struck in living Truth. Rama does not say India has not the hunger for Truth, but it is the false appetite of a man suffering from chronic indigestion, and in India, as Rama told you, it is more or less philosophic indigestion. All the traditions, conventions, customs, castes, superstitions, and religious make-beliefs of India have become only dead symptoms of spiritual ailments due to the cramping of self into one set way of living on the mental plane, which, however beautiful to start with, has already degenerated into a

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system of fraudulent ignorance and hypocritical assertions."

"Countries *per se* cannot be divided into good or bad, spiritually or mentally"; he continued, "there are some men and women in the country whose lives alone count; the others do not. It is a matter mostly of chance whether it is more of the former class or of the latter that you yourself come in personal contact with in each country. An estimate based on such acquaintance must forever remain personal. Hell and Heaven live under the same roof, nay under the same skin, and so it is everywhere in all countries, in all climes, in all persons, and it is the particular manifestation of either seen by you that determines your own attitude to that country. So if you choose to come in personal contact with the most noble and the most beautiful portion of a country and its men and women, all countries are equally spiritual, equally noble, equally beautiful, equally divine".

"No! What about your preachings of the Hindu philosophy, I mean?" added I.

"Ah! for that you need a colossal self-preparation to talk to America. It is not an amateur's business. It is the cultured *elite*, the University men of America that must come to your side, and to produce any permanent effect on that country is not easy. The groups of fair rich women having nothing to do at home, might come round you to listen to your strange words and to look at your strange face, but that is curiosity. Of the many hundreds of

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women Rama met, only two were serious, and especially one of them Ganga[1] was divine; Rama met no such other woman in India or in America . . .

One day a great actress of America asked for a private interview which Rama freely gave her. She was loaded with pearls and jewels, and so heavily perfumed was she, that it seemed, as if she was made of fragrance. There was a smile rippling on her lips which was so new in its every new eddy.

But as she came, she fell on the floor weeping: 'Swami, I am miserable! make me happy. Look not to my pearls, nor to my smiles—they are my outward habits of which, I, my me, my I, is sick.' Rama comforted her. Her confession appeared to Rama to be the confession of Western civilisation itself. . . .

Another lady came, she was much distressed. She had lost her child and wished Rama to make her happy. Rama replied, 'Rama sells happiness and you must pay the price.' 'Any thing Swami! Any thing, any price.' 'In the kingdom of happiness the coin is different,' said Rama, 'and you must pay the coin of Rama's country.' 'Yes, Swami, any thing!'

'All right. Take that little Negro boy and love him as your own child,' said Rama, 'and this is the price you must pay.'

'Ah! it is so difficult.'

'Then it is also very difficult to be happy,' said Rama.

[1] Ganga was the name Swami Rama gave to the American Lady.

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But she did get her happiness and she felt ever so much better."

His work in America took a favourable turn and it seems from the accounts received after his death, that he also took up the cause of the Indian students and organised societies in their aid. He condemned the caste system of India. The press-cuttings given below, as received from an American lady after his death, clearly show how much enthusiasm for the Indian cause he succeeded in creating by his wholly unselfish endeavours.

Rama paid a visit to an American University and gave an address on *The World's Debt to India.* The President of the University called it a new contribution to the missing chapter of the history of the introduction of Vedanta thought in Western culture. A few books were brought by the clerk of the University to be presented to Rama. One of the bindings was a bit soiled, and the President turned to the clerk and said, "Have you not heard the Swami just now? Don't you know to whom these books are to be presented? They are to be the offerings of the University to Rama the Divine. Please bring another."

Swami Rama visited other Universities also, not as a mathematician of repute to deliver scientific discourses, but as the Philosopher from the East holding the torch of Vedanta. For much as he loved his mathematics, he loved Vedanta more, and wherever he went he drew the spontaneous love, regard and reverence of all whom he came in contact with.

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The lectures and the inspired talks that he gave during his itineraries helped the Vedanta movement to no small extent. The work that he did was however no part of any organised missionary activity, nor did he ever care to seek pecuniary support for the cause of Vedanta. The value of his appeal lay not in any resulting funds but in his own radiant magnetic personality which left its indelible impress upon one and all.

The lectures that he delivered and the talks that he gave in America during this period have been collected and published under the title "In Woods of God-Realisation". They were taken down just as he talked by a lady steno-typist, Mrs. P. Whitman, a great admiring disciple of the Swami, and on account of his sudden death, they were published just as they were taken down without being revised. They fill three large royal octavo size volumes of about 500 pages each.

The following letter, sent to me after his death, by Mrs. Wellman of Los Angeles, California, faithfully records how highly infectious were not only the joy, but the ideas of Swami Rama. I met this devoted lady, Mrs. Wellman, at Dehra Dun, India, when she was on a visit to this country and we together made a pilgrimage to the Tehri hills and toured the Punjab plains.

Says Mrs. Wellman in her letter:

. . . It was just the beginning of the year 1903 when I first met this great soul. He was lecturing in San Francisco. I went to hear him *reluctantly*. But

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with his chant of OM, my mind was lifted, my very being vibrated with a joy I never felt before. A heavenly, blissful peace illumined me.

And I never missed another opportunity to feed upon the bread of life he so freely gave. He also made an appeal to Americans to help his people by going to India and living as *one* of them in their very families. Quite a number said they would go. But not one of them went. One day I said to him, "Swami Rama, for what you have done for me, what can I do for your people in exchange?" He said, "You can do a great deal, if you will but go to India." "I will go," I replied. But friends dissuaded and even derided me. Some said I was crazy to think of going, especially as I had not sufficient money to return. But Rama said, "If you *really* know Vedanta, you would not fear, for you will find God in India the same as in America." So did God the Divine Intelligent Principle of life *prove* His all-sustaining power, through the tender, loving care of my beloved Hindu brothers and sisters, yea, my children. Yet five months elapsed before I fulfilled my promise to our Blessed Rama and set sail for his native country—alone, not knowing a person in that far-off country yet with Faith, "leaning on the sustaining arm of the Infinite" as taught by Rama . . .

Mrs. Pauline Whitman,[1] the Swami's disciple, who has been mentioned above, wrote to me a long letter on his death, which runs thus:

Words fail me when I attempt to express what is so difficult to make apparent in the cold narrow words of language. Rama's language was that of the sweet innocent child, the birds, the flowers, the flowing stream, the waving tree branches, that of the sun, the moon and stars. His was the language running under the outer shows of the world and of people.

Under the oceans, continents, under the fields and the roots of the grasses and the trees, his life passed

[1] Kamalananda was the name that Swami Rama gave to Mrs. Pauline Whitman.

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deep into nature, he was the very life of nature. His language penetrated far under the little thoughts and dreams of men. How few are the ears which hear that wondrous melody. He heard it, lived it, breathed it, taught it, and his whole soul was imbued with it. He was the messenger full of joy.

O Free soul! Soul that has completed its relation to the body! O soaring, happy beyond words, into other worlds passing, salutations to you, freed, redeemed soul!

* * * * *

He was so gentle, unaffected, childlike, pure and noble, sincere earnest and unassuming that all who came in contact with him with a heart yearning for the Truth, could not but receive inestimable benefit. After each lecture or class-lesson, questions were put which were always answered so clearly and concisely, sweetly and lovingly. He was ever filled with bliss and peace and was constantly humming OM when not employed in talking, writing, or reading. He saw Divinity in each and all and every one was addressed by him as "Blessed Divinity".

* * * * *

Rama was a continual bubbling spring of happiness. In God he lived, moved and had his body-being, nay he was the very self of God. He once wrote to me, "Those who have a mind to enjoy can enjoy, the diamonds shining in the brilliant starlit skies, can derive abundance of pleasure from the smiling forests and dancing rivers, can reap inexhaustible joy from the cool breeze, the warm sunshine and the balmy moonlight, freely placed at the service of each and all by nature. Those who believe that their happiness depends upon particular conditions will find the day of enjoyment ever recede from them and run away constantly like the will-o'-the-wisp. The so-called wealth of the world instead of being a source of happiness only serves as an artificial screen to shut out the glory of the panorama of all nature, and of the heavens."

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Rama lived in a tent on the hillside and took his meals at the Ranch house. It was a beautiful place rugged with scenery, high mountains on either side draped with evergreen trees and thick tangled underbush. The Sacramento river flowed turbulently down this valley and here it was that Rama read many, many books, wrote his sublime poetry and meditated hours at a time. He sat on a large boulder in the river where the current was very strong day after day and week after week, only coming to the house at meal times when he always gave us beautiful talks. Numerous visitors from Shasta Springs would come to see him and they were always welcomed gladly. His sublime thoughts left a deep and lasting impression on all. Those who came out of curiosity went away with their curiosity satisfied, and the seed of truth planted forever in their hearts, may be for the time being unconsciously to them, but to sprout and develop into strong and sturdy trees whose branches will twine together from all parts of the earth in a bond of brotherhood and love divine. Seeds of truth always grow.

He took long walks. Thus he lived there in Shasta Springs a busy, simple, free, and joyous life. He was so happy. His laughter came spontaneously and could be heard plainly at the house when he was at the river side. Free, free was he like a child and a saint. He would remain in God-consciousness for days together. His unfaltering devotion to India and his desire to raise her benighted people was indeed perfect self-abnegation.

* * * * *

After I left there, I received a letter from him which I afterwards learnt was written during a period of severe illness. "The degree of concentration and pure divine feeling is wonderfully high now and God-consciousness is possessing me with a marvellous sweep. As the body is subject to fickle whims and constant change, I will never, never identify myself with these naughty will-o'-the-wisps. In sickness, concentration and inner peace is supremely intense. He or she must be a poor stingy miser whose close-fistedness grudges to accord due hospitality to the passing guests—bodily ailment and the like."

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He would always tell us to "feel, feel all the time that the power supreme that manifests itself in the sun and the stars is the same, the same. I am the same, the same is yourself. Take up this real self, this glory of thine, contemplate this life eternal, meditate on this your real beauty and forget clean all thoughts of the little bodily ties as if you never had anything to do with these false, seeming realities (nay shadows). No death, no sickness, no sorrows. Be perfectly happy, thoroughly blissful, saturated with peace. Keep yourself thoroughly collected above the body or the little self". This he taught each and all.

* * * * *

To think that it has been my privilege to have met and conversed with and aided such a holy man as Rama is wonderful. He was a child of Aurora and emitted his music from sunrise till evening. It matters not to him what the clocks said or the attitudes or labours of men were. His elastic and vigorous thoughts kept pace with the sun so that the day was a perpetual morning. "The millions are awake enough for physical labour, but only one in a hundred millions for a poetic and divine life." So says Thoreau. Rama was one of such rare souls who but occasionally visit this earth.

They say the sun is but His photo,
They say that Man is in His image.
They say he twinkles in the stars,
They say he smiles in fragrant flowers,
They say he sings in nightingales,
They say he breathes in cosmic air,
They say he weeps in winter nights.
They say he runs in prattling streams,
They say he sings in rainbow arches,
In floods of light, they, say, he marches.

So Rama said and it is so.

The letters and newspaper cuttings which are reproduced below show how strenuously Swami Rama worked for the sake of educating Indian youths in

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America and organising a regular campaign to eradicate the injustice and inhumanity of the caste system in India. It seems he took up the work in the spirit of an American, as in India, he worked as an Indian monk. He did not lay so much emphasis on eradication of caste in India before going to America or even after his return.

In America, he interpreted the married life and the home in terms of Vedanta, while in India, he again thought that it is the Monkism which is mostly needed for her.

Swami Rama was at home when he talked of God and ecstasy of love, but other subjects he simply touched upon as occasioned by the environments.

One of his pet themes was how a man of ecstasy who has no personal aims and wishes and desires, becomes, at times, the vehicle of other people's prayers and fulfils them as a medium without those desires coming to stick to him in any sense. He himself as contrasted in his American and Indian surroundings is an apt illustration of this piece of transcendental philosophy.

The following letters were addressed to Mrs. P. Whitman, on the death of Swami Rama.

814, Fidelity Bldg., Buffalo, N.Y.,

January 18th, 1907.

MY DEAR MRS. WHITMAN,

The Rama Society, to which your letter of December 24th was addressed, no longer exists, but the letter came to me as the ex-secretary of the Society. The news of the Swami's passing away was, of course, a very great

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surpise to me, but I can hardly feel that it was a misfortune for him. His short life on earth had yielded him a rich harvest of experience, and perhaps its purpose was fully accomplished. Peace be to him !

The Swami spent two or three weeks in Buffalo in the spring and early summer of 1904. He gave numerous lectures on both the dark and bright sides of life in India and upon the Vedanta Philosophy, laying particular stress, in the Indian lectures, upon the evils of the caste system and the desirability of destroying it. He made strong appeals on behalf of India, and succeeded in forming here one of the societies which, as you doubtless know, it was his aim to establish in cities throughout the country (for the importation of Hindu boys to be educated in this country). He proved an ardent and eloquent pleader for this cause, and aroused much enthusiasm among those who heard him. Buffalo, however, is rather a conservative town in some ways, and those who organised the Rama Society being mostly busy people of only moderate means, they soon found that the responsibility and work involved in upbuilding and maintaining such an organisation were beyond their powers. Therefore what money had been collected was forwarded to the Society in Portland, Oregon, which seemed to be very active and promising, and the Buffalo Society, not long after the Swami's departure, dissolved.

As you probably know, the Swami lectured in a large number of places throughout the United States. I do not know all the places he visited before reaching Buffalo, but from here he went to Lilydale (a very prominent spiritualistic centre in this state), Chicago, Boston, Greenacre, Maine (where representatives of many forms of faith lecture every summer), New York City, and we finally heard from him way down in Florida where he had gone to recover from the fatigue of his work and travelling.

The Swami greatly attracted people over here, not only by his learning and spiritual wisdom, but also by his cleverness, his sweet and gracious manners and (not least in this country) by his simple, democratic ways and amiable adaptability to the conditions about him,

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despite the fact that he came from a land of rigid caste-tradition and was himself a high-caste Brahmin. He would meditate along by the hour, in true oriental fashion, or willingly converse on philosophy, or joke and laugh with visitors, or join in a game of ball, as occasion offered.

He was keenly observant of the spirit and institutions of America, as also of its failings, and he realised that India had much to learn from "The Young Giant of the West," while at the same time America might well listen humbly to much that India can teach it. He seemed especially impressed with the freedom of women in this country and with the fact that their freedom does not demoralise them. He often spoke with pleasure about it.

I presume you have the addresses of other people with whom the Swami stayed in this country, and quite likely they can give you more information about his work and its results than I can. As you doubtless know. Mr. William H. Galvani is (or was) the Secretary of the Oregon Society in Portland, Oregon, and, if you have not already written him, I think he could tell you considerable about the Swami's work. We in Buffalo thought that the Swami never fully realised the magnitude of the labour and responsibility incumbent upon those who undertook to carry on his work in America. This would have been very natural in view of the great differences between his own race and country and ours.

ANNIE F. HASTINGS

Denver, Colo.,

January 25, 1907.

MY DEAR MRS. WHITMAN,

It was three years ago that I met the most beautiful soul I have ever known. His presence brought me nearer to God, the fountain head, and his words all were so simple, but carried with them the conviction that he knew; and he signed himself while with us as "Swami Rama".

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But it was not his words, it was not himself, his personality but God that we recognised in him that brought all who came in contact with him to a fuller knowledge and understanding.

He was from the far East, small of stature and brown, but he more than filled the place of the larger man of the West. Wherever he passed, flowers sprang up and the seed from them is to be scattered broad-cast until the whole world is a garden, and the name of the flower is Love.

He told us of the Christ Love, the Love of Krishna and the Love of God. Told it so that we understood. He planted in our hearts the desire to grow to open our petals to sunshine and scatter fragrance. To make the world better for our having lived in it.

If storms come to us we must be glad, and the fragrance is sweeter after the rain, and if we so live, we have not lived in vain.

"The bubble bursts and becomes the whole ocean," and I hear that Swami Rama's body is no more. He is the entire Universe. He is in all and if we look for him we will find him. He is in the snow-storm, in each tiny flake; but they fall so silently that we must look or we are unaware of the visit.

> He gave his all ; He found still more
> Upon the Oceans restless shore,
> He found it in the blade of grass
> And in the winds that swiftly pass
> Fanning his noble brow. In all
> That lived the answering call
> Goes back to him from His all.

He told us of the power that would make the trees grow, the rivers flow; and of the same power that is in us that makes our hair grow and our blood flow—of the One Power in all life—so that we could see that our power is unlimited.

The sun does not have to tell us it is shining but we feel the warm rays, and those who meet us will feel the

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rays of love we send out and will get the fragrance just as we are helped by the memory of Swami Rama.

FLORENCE K.

Honolulu T.H.,

10-1-1907.

DEAR MADAM,

Your very kind note of the 26th ultimo received. Much as I would like to give you a full account of Swami Rama's works here, time and circumstances make it impossible. Rama remained here during November and December, 1903, and during his stay he endeared himself to every one who made his acquaintance. Among these were many men and women of high standing in his community. It is scarcely necessary to say that we all feel deeply over his sudden death, and yet we realise that all things are governed in this world of ours by inexorable law, and such things as "accidents" exist only in mere words for the purpose of designating effects the causes of which are hidden from our understanding.

Our Society is quite in earnest about continuing the work inaugurated here by Rama, as you will see from the copy of the Resolutions enclosed herewith. I also enclose some newspaper cuttings which you can use and some extracts from the Society's record—these may prove of some interest. During the time Rama was here much appeared in the newspapers, but it is so long ago that no single copies can be found, and hence no additional clippings are to be had.

Should there be anything further that I could do I beg you to let me know.

With kindest regards and best wishes,

W. M. H. GALWANI.

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COPIES OF THE NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS

The Rocky Mountain News, of January 4th, 1904, Denver, Colo., wrote as follows:

At Unity Church yesterday afternoon Swami Rama, the Hindu Professor now in Denver, lectured on the principles of his Philosophy. Professor Rama's mission to America is to enlist aid in his attempt to break down the Hindu caste system. He also has an ethical philosophy in which he teaches a religion he calls "The Common Path," which he expounds to those interested wherever he goes. This morning Professor Rama will speak in the Ministerial Alliance on the caste system of India. To-morrow afternoon he will begin a series of lectures on his religion at Unity Church. The lecture will begin at 2 o'clock and the subject will be "The Secret of Success". Other topics are: "The Realisation of God through Love." "What are you." "The History and Home of Happiness." "The diagnosis, causes and cure of Sin." In his lecture yesterday afternoon Swami Rama said:

"The object of this philosophy is to regulate the conduct of the present life. It has a plain, practical bearing upon the things of to-day. You may be disappointed, but there is nothing mystical, or occult about me, although I come from the deepest forests of the Himalayas. To minimise the waste of energy, to abolish wear and tear of body and mind, to secure freedom from all kinds of dissipation, due to envy, vanity, distemper and blues; to cure mental dyspepsia, and to remove intellectual pauperism and spiritual slavery; to attain the secret of successful work; to realise God through Love; to keep in touch with the origin of knowledge, how to preserve our equilibrium and peace, these are the subjects I teach.

My religion is not Hinduism, Mohammadanism, Christianity, Catholicism, or Protestantism, but it is antagonistic to none. The overlapping area covered by the light, the sun, the stars, the rivers, gravity, mind and body, this is the field of my religion. Are there any

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Presbyterian lilies? Are there any Methodist landscapes? So do I make no distinction of class, colour, or creed in greeting as my co-religionists the rays of sun, the beams of stars, the leaves of trees, the blades of grass, the grains of sand, the hearts of tigers, elephants, lambs, ants, men, women and children. My religion is the religion without a nickname. It is the religion of nature. I label none, brand none, possess none, but serve all like light and sun. So I call it 'THE COMMON PATH'.

The central teaching of the 'Common Path,' I have put into verse:

'Dear little violet, with thy dewy eye,
Look up and tell me truly
When no one is nigh,
What thou art?'

The violet answered with a gentle sigh:

'If that is to be told when alone,
Then I must sadly own
It will never be known
What am I,
For my brothers and sisters are all around
In the air and on the ground,
And they are the same as I.'"

A member of a caste, higher than that of the Princes and Rajahs of India, Swami Rama has devoted his life to the betterment of his race. Small, slight, with dark, eager, bright eyes and olive skin, attired in a black suit wearing at all times a brilliant red turban, this is Swami Rama. This is *the* man from India now in Portland. Not *a* man from India. Men from India not infrequently reach this port. But seldom if ever has one of such learning, such broad human sympathies, such unselfish motives carried here.

For more than two weeks Swami Rama has been in Portland quietly conducting classes and speaking before audiences and congregations of all kinds and denominations for the Women's Club, Bishop Scott Academy, the

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Y.M.C.A., the Unitarian Church, the Spiritualists, the Christian Union and others. For his philosophy is broad enough to embrace all beliefs. It is very like a great blanket, large enough to cover every human creed and leave room for many more to creep beneath its warmth. Swami, therefore, does not stop to consider "Is the doctrine of this Church or organisation consistent with any creed?" No, he cheerfully consents to speak wherever asked and when he discovers that this leads to a multiplicity of conflicting engagements he patiently and with a contrite heart proceeds, with the aid of a few practical friends with whom he is blessed, to straighten things out and to make up for his blunders by speaking morning, afternoon and evening, every day if necessary. Whenever and wherever he has addressed an audience or class, he has spoken with purpose and effect and has drawn men out of their own littleness. Ministers, judges, lawyers, questioners and doubters, find his addresses interesting.

Briefly and broadly speaking Swami Rama stands where philosophy and practical science meet. He is an accomplished linguist, perfectly at home with modern as well as ancient languages. He has studied exhaustively the ancient mysteries and religions and is perfectly at home with modern history, literature, folklore and the philosophies of all countries. He is late Professor of Mathematics and Religious Philosophy of the great Punjab University, at Lahore. Speak to him of his religion and he refers to the Vedantic "Philosophy," which points to one's inward consciousness for inspiration.

His mission in America is twofold. Primarily it is to interest Americans in his own country and countrymen, with the object of helping to educate Hindus. It is his object to bring them to American colleges where they may imbibe not only learning, but American push, and independence and the spirit of American freedom, that they in turn may return to their own land and teach their own people. In this way it is his hope that the terrible caste system existing there may be broken up.

His second object is to spread his philosophy, his glorious gospel of man's oneness with the eternal.

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He hopes among other things, to persuade the colleges of Oregon and other States of the Union to offer free scholarships to Hindu students.

In San Francisco where he spent two months he succeeded in interesting some very influential people in his cause which resulted in providing for one student. After leaving Portland he will visit the larger cities, where he hopes to interest a still greater number of people.

The Portland Journal wrote as follows:

Swami Rama, high priest of India, has been lecturing and teaching in Portland for the past ten days, and has interested many people in his plan for accomplishing effectual missionary work in India with the expenditure of very much less money than is at present being spent by missionaries in that country.

This plan for making more efficacious the missionary work in India, Rama will lay before the people in a lecture on "The Condition of India," which he will deliver at the Marquan Theatre on Sunday afternoon, December 20th, at 3 o'clock. The lecture will be free, but reserved seats for same may be secured at the Marquan Box Office any time after 10 o'clock on Saturday morning.

Rama does not ask money for himself personally but a collection will be taken up after the lecture, to give all present an opportunity to contribute to the fund which he is raising to defray the expenses of the missionary work he is inaugurating. This money will not go to India, but will be all spent in America, as it is Rama's plan to bring young Hindu students, post-graduates of Indian Universities over to America, on the condition that after finishing their education here they will devote their time and energy in working a social-reform revolution in their native land.

Dr. Starr Jordan of Standford University, President B. I. Wheller of California University, and Judge Marrow, of the United States Court of Appeals, of

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California, are the custodians of the fund to which the contributions are asked.

A San Francisco paper, speaking of a course of lectures delivered by Swami Ram in San Francisco, says:

The old order of things is to be reversed. Out of the jungles of Upper India has come a man of astonishing wisdom, a prophet, philosopher, scientist and priest, who proposes to play the rôle of the missionary in the United States, and preach a new doctrine of unselfishness and spiritual power to the idolatrous worshippers of the mighty dollar. He is a Brahmin of the Brahmins, a Goswami of the highest caste, and he is known among his brethren as Swami Rama.

This remarkable sage of the Himalayas is a slender intellectual young man with the ascetic mould of a priest and the light complexion of a high caste Brahmin. His forehead is broad and high, his head splendidly developed, his nose thin and delicate as a woman's, while his chin reveals great firmness of will, without stubbornness. A wide, kindly, almost tender mouth parts freely over dazzlingly white, perfect white teeth in a smile that seems to light up all surrounding space, and wins the instantaneous confidence and good will of all who come within the circle of its radiance.

"How do I live?" he said yesterday. "This is simple. I do not try. I believe. I attune my soul to the harmony of love for all men. That makes all men love me, and where love is, there is no want, no suffering. This state of mind and faith bring influences to me that supply me needs without asking. If I am hungry there is always some one to feed me. I am forbidden to receive money or to ask for anything. Yet I have every thing, and more than most, for I live largely in a world that few can attain."

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The Oregonian contained the following:

Swami Tirath Ram, the eloquent and learned priest from India, who will lecture at the Marquan Theatre on Sunday afternoon next, on "The Present Condition of India," mostly declines to say much concerning himself, his attainments, and his position in his country.

Rama never tires of speaking of his caste-ridden and down-trodden countrymen, nor of methods of helping them more effectually than the missionary methods at present practised by Europe and America do, noble, generous and sincere though these are; but he is slow to understand our interest in personality, our desire to know who he is, and all about him. And for this reason this information for the most part, must be obtained from the friends he has won since his sojourn in Portland by his earnestness, simplicity and sincerity.

Learned in many languages, scientist and philosopher of renown in his own land, Rama was for a term of years Professor of Natural Philosophy at Punjab University in India. This work he gave up, also high caste, and devoted several years to independent research in the line of religious and philosophical study, and stands second to no one in a knowledge and understanding of the Vedantic scriptures. In December, 1901, he acted as the President of a Parliament of Religions held at Muttra, India. As to the manner in which he discharged this high honour, *The Free Thinker* a paper published at Lahore, India, had the following to say:

"Of Swami Rama Tirath, M.A., who was the life and soul of the last convention, the writer's vocabulary is too poor to enable him to speak in appropriate terms. As the moderation-chief he had ample time at the close of each sitting to sum up the day's proceedings and give expression to his own thoughts; and when he spoke he was always at his best every man's man, thoughtful and serious, lively and severe by turns, keeping the whole audience, composed of heterogeneous shades of opinion, spell-bound, as it were, for hours together until late in the evening, when he announced amid the ringing of hearty applause, that the day's meeting was closed. He

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is a quiet, modest and unassuming youngman in the hey-day of youth, well versed in ancient and modern philosophy, as well as in formal sciences, and is withal made of a stuff of which persons of honest convictions ought to be made. Gentle and amiable, childlike, innocent in manners and behaviour, he yet has the iron hand inside the silken glove, for while scrupulously regardful of the feelings of others, he is far more outspoken in expressing his opinions than reckless, wayward, self-assumed custodians of 'divine will'. It is hoped that this lover of truth and liberalism will never have cause to repent the course of life he has adopted, nor find reason to regret his identification with the cause of Dharma-Mahotsava, whose interests, as a learned Sannyasin, he is most admirably suited to serve."

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CHAPTER XIII

THE MONK RETURNS: SWAMI RAMA AT MUTTRA AND PUSHKAR

ON his return from the United States of America he stayed at Muttra with an old Pharisee, Swami Shiv Guna Acharya in what was called Shanti Ashram on the opposite bank of the Jamuna. I came down from Lahore with a friend to see him there. On arrival at about eight in the morning, I found that he was still in his room with the door locked from inside. Even at the risk of disturbing him, I knocked at his door. "Who is it?" said he, "I, your Puran" replied I. He got up and opened the door. I met him after three years. It was winter. He was clad in an orange-coloured blanket, and he met me impersonally, bade me sit by him as he started, and there was a flash of light from his eyes as he said: "Sacrifice will secure the freedom of this country. Rama's head must go, then Puran's, then of a hundred others before the country can be free. India, mother India must be free." I was astonished. This was not the talk he gave us at Tokyo where I first met him. The visit to the different lands of freedom

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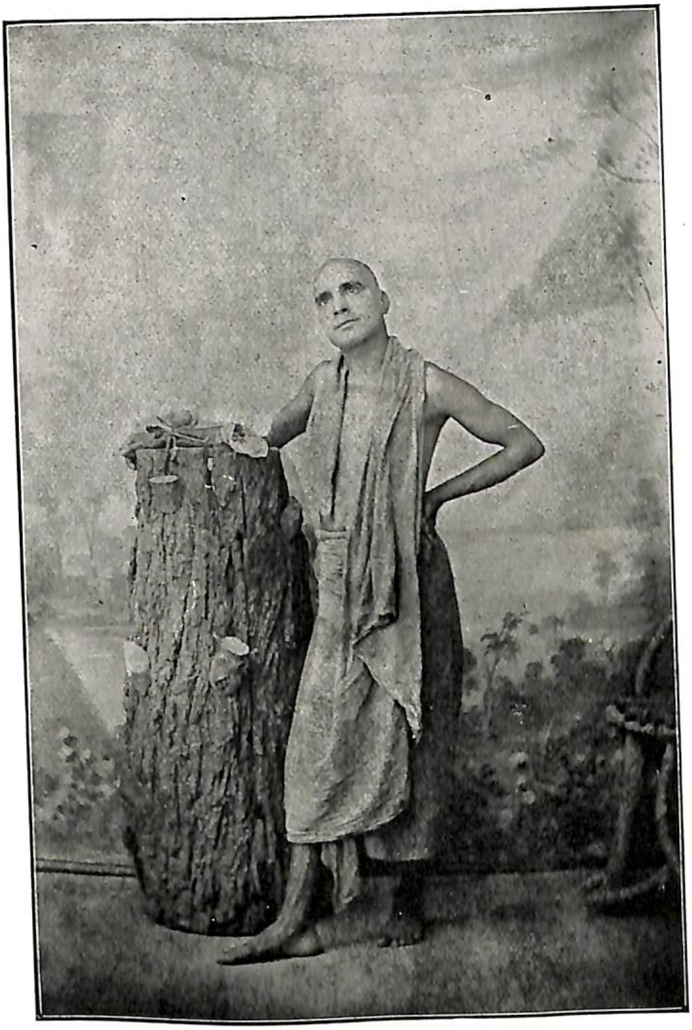

Swami Rama after his return from America

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had, it seems, beaten his religious propaganda hollow. Here from all his talks I gathered that he gave the foremost place now to political propaganda. As we emerged after a while from the room, two gentlemen from Muttra clad in pattoo with black caps and long mufflers appeared on the scene apparently to see the Swami. The Swami responded to their salutations with hearty laughter that went ringing and ringing. He laughed continuously and having finished with it he said: "My countrymen! You have come to *detect* Rama. Rama opens his heart to you. The best thing in the world is to detect Rama. Detect him, find him, the world is under your feet."

I and my companion were a bit surprised at this unusual method of his meeting these people at that particular hour. They immediately fell down at his feet and said: "Swamiji! Forgive. We came duty bound. Seeing your face, we are vanquished. We are overpowered by your love. We are sinners." And they confessed that they were men on duty as men of the Government's Criminal Investigation Department!

Swami Shiv Guna Acharya would hold private conversations with him for hours and as Swami told me, advising him to eschew his politics, to meet the Princes of India, get together a lot of money and establish his own sect and mission and gather power and all that old wisdom of the poor blind Pharisees. Swami Rama treated this with contempt but he suffered staying with the

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monk for a little while: not that Swami Rama did not know the man, but he had once again in his own charitable way on his landing in India, accepted a total surrender of this monk voluntarily made by him as he went to receive him at Bombay. He, in a private room, dedicated his life to Swami Rama. Swami Rama took it in his own spirit. But it was soon found that this Pharisee had his own irons in the fire, and wished to utilise the character of Swami Rama to make himself famous in India. This alliance was finally broken by Swami Rama, by quietly slipping away to Pushkar from Muttra and from there he wrote to Swami Shiv Guna Acharya (see his letter given below [1]) that he wished to work on his own lines and not to think of Princes and wealth and missions at all.

At Muttra, he loved to sit on the silver sands of the Jamuna and loved to bask in the sun doing nothing. Once he saw a few boats full of men and women coming to this side of the river from Muttra. They were Indian Christians going out for a picnic. Swami Rama saw them and said: "Puranji! They are Rama's; Rama is theirs too! Can you arrange at all for a talk? Rama wishes to speak to them." He was almost bare with one ochre-coloured *dhoti* on. I went towards the incoming party of men, and they came and stood and listened to him, and they loved to listen to him. He talked to them in a very happy strain and during the conversation he said: "Rama thanks Christianity for having elevated

[1] Chapter XVI *infra.*

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you. What Hindus could not do for you, the Christians have done. Your elevation to a social dignity and your happy looks delight Rama. Rama belongs to you. You are Rama's." Then he told them some stories of his American tour and exhorted them to love their mother country.

* * * * *

At Pushkar, Swami Narayan, his disciple joined him and I too went thither from Lahore with one or two friends. He was living in the Kishangarh State house on the bank of the famous Pushkar Lake swarming with alligators. He had a small hollow piece of bamboo in his hand and as I met him he said: "You have not seen this bamboo piece. It is wonderful, it is Rama's magic wand to drive the alligators away, it is Rama's portmanteau for keeping his pencils and papers (and here he showed me many such things safely lodged in the hollow), and this is Rama's everything. Rama has reduced his physical wants to this" and he laughed heartily. "One becomes a veritable king, when his travelling kit is reduced to this and his wants confined to the narrow space of its hollow." He would sit on the top of the roof in the sun as it was winter still, and say: "Rama dislikes rooms, they look like graves."

He would take us all out in the evening on the Pushkar hill and tramp, tramp, tramp. He would not let us rest and would ask us go on singing (repeating) OM. No slackness was permitted. Once he sat on a slab on the brow of a mountain, "Why cannot

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these men find God? Call them, let them come to Rama, God is found!" His eyes would close, tears would stream out, his face would sparkle, and his arms would go vibrating in air, as if he was clasping the very universe in his embrace. "God! God! Here is God! Come those who wish to see God." And then he would be silent, his upper lip pressing his lower, and his face assuming the expression of a child that had just found his mother. His lips would almost part in child-like faith and dependence. During his talks, he would visibly flow out in silence, like a stream, rippling out, diffusing away, away!

He took me to take a bath with him in the Pushkar lake. "Rama will go before you and you bathe standing behind him, but we must bathe in company with these alligators." And as we got in, he went breast-deep into the water, and half afraid for him and fully afraid for myself, as I knew no swimming, I followed him—we were two good morsels of flesh for the alligators. But apparently he was not afraid as he knew their habits well. He let his bamboo stick float before him, as if it was a real magic-wand forbidding entrance to the alligators, and began dipping into the water. Closing his nostrils, pressing them between his two fingers, he took a plunge. As he rose he said: "Puranji! see the alligators have started towards us. Come, they are not willing that we should stay more in their waters." So we hurriedly came out. And Swami Rama did not forget his little bamboo and stroked it

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and said: "This is a very good fellow. He serves Rama most faithfully." During the nights, with the light of a candle or an old Indian earthen lamp, he would read the poet Nazir and go on laughing, laughing. He was very fond of Nazir and admired him for his freedom. He would say "He is Rama's free boy. Rama minds not his little vulgarities. Let them be. But he is of metal that rings with the sound of God."

In Punjabi folk-literature, he was fond of Gopal Singh's Kafis and he recited them shutting his eyes, with the original pang of the poet himself. "Rama knows Gopal Singh from his Sialkot days. This good man went all the way to Brindaban on foot. He danced all his life in self-intoxication."

He did not permit any one to speak to him against any one. "It is not good speaking ill of others and indulging in low, mean personal criticism of anybody. We must see the bright side of everything and every man and justify them as ourselves."

But sometimes the conversations on India and its leadership from many mouths would unconsciously stray away into personal criticism, when he would chant OM and say, "The temple bell has gone. Hush! No personal criticism." And make us repeat OM again "You all get slack. The repetition of OM' must go on," he would constantly urge. In this connection I recollect a humorous incident which may be repeated here.

There was one young Madrasi boy come with me from Lahore Technical School, Mr. Naidu, who, I

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believe, afterwards, went to America to learn applied chemistry and returned with success. " Naidu ! Bring *Dâl*," Swami Rama would say, while taking his meals outside the kitchen, and Mr. Naidu would promptly say just ' OM ' in reply. And as he would come back with *Dâl*, he would not say, " Here it is, Swamiji," but only " OM " ! And so abrupt and enthusiastic was his repetition on every occasion, that once we all laughed for hours on his ' OM ' to everything and his one answer to every question.

* * * * *

He took us to the Yajna Bhumi of Pushkar and told us how Pushkar lake was sacred. It was the holy place of Brahma Yajna which was celebrated here with great eclat. All gods and men had assembled but the conch shell would not sound, and it was the sound of the conch shell which was considered to be the voice of God declaring the Yajna to be a success. While this ceremonious Yajna was going on at this place, the true Brahma Yajna was going on in the heart of a lonely grass-cutter. He was not of their caste. He was so deeply immersed in God, that, when by chance, the sycthe with which he was cutting grass struck his own flesh and wounded it, there came the colourless blood of grass from his veins and not the red human blood. With this wound, the man rose in divine madness and began dancing. And as he danced the trees and mountains began to dance with him, and the leader of the Yajna came and fell at the feet of this holy man and requested him to honour their Yajna,

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as the conch shell did not sound! And when this holy man joined the Yajna, the conch shell sounded, and even the Gods were surprised. "This is Vedanta" Swami Rama ended. After relating any beautiful story of self-realisation, he would say, "This is Vedanta."

At Muttra, he would take his admirers in crowds out to the sandy wastes, and make the old bearded grandees take off their coats and boots and take physical exercise. No one was spared. All must take physical exercise. He would halt as the sun went down and begin his rapturous, measureless dances as his admirers would sit dumb seeing this rose-like man making his joy infinite.

At Pushkar, there were not many men, but the half a dozen that went there were taught to tramp aimlessly for the sake of the pleasure of mere tramping.

All the lectures that Swami Rama delivered at this period have a strong odour of patriotic fervour, particularly his messages to young men, Criticism and Universal Love, Yajna, National Dharma, Brahmacharya, Patriotism. His introduction to Rai Baij Nath's *Hinduism—Ancient and Modern*, is a masterpiece, and he paints himself there as a true son of India. But in his letters, he is himself.

Here in these written articles and messages, one finds the clear design of his lofty vision of Humanity with which he started from the Himalayas to the West, but he gave the message stamped with his inspired individuality in a deep personal way. It seems

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apparent that he came back from America much impressed with the "success" achieved by the Western nations and wished his poor countrymen also to rise. One Religion cannot unite them, let the love of one common country inspire them with some life even physical. But this was not his own apt subject, and his appeal mixed as it was with transcendentalism was always weak. Swami Rama was not in his element here, he could not surpass Swami Vivekananda in his glorious speeches on the subject. Swami Vivekananda was a born nation-builder, while Swami Rama was an ecstatic personality with no thought of the morrow, no eye on the deeds of men. The contact with the West had therefore weakened Swami Rama on the whole, and that wondrous delicacy of emotion, that trembling throb of the Universal had cut itself into scarlet shreds to adorn stale sentiments on patriotism and common intellectual methods of nation building. Had he lived long and if he had developed his mind towards this direction instead of towards religious ecstacy, he would have become a great Nation-Builder, for he had in him all the latent capacities for one. But as it is, he shook off these thoughts of a limited sympathy as birds shake off the drops of water from their plumage. And ceaseless as he was in his effort for God and His Love—he would have surely shaken off these impressions from the West, even had he not taken to Sanskrit literature in his solitudes.

But nothing could blur the mirror of his consciousness. When Mrs. Wellman, before her departure to

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America went to see him at Beas Ashram, he came to meet her, rowed in a basket by a rope across the swift current of the Ganges. He did so because he did not wish her to take this quaint perilous form of crossing the river. Mrs. Wellman on her departure to America told me a year before Swami's death, that Rama would no more return to the plains from the mountains. As they parted, he said to her facing the setting sun on the blue current of the flowing Ganges and as the sun shone full on his God-incarnadined face, "Suryananda! (that was the name Swami had given to Mrs. Wellman) Good-bye! Go! Look! The sun is setting yonder! This is Rama. Forget not the Golden Land, carry it within you wherever you go!" And his tone and gesture indicated to Mrs. Wellman that he was bidding her the farewell of death! Mrs. Wellman sighed and said, "India has lost him, Swami Rama will no more return from the mountains. It is all over."

A year after, he bade a touching farewell to me almost in the same terms, as he lived then in Uttra Khanda: "This is Hema Khanda, the Golden Land. Wherever you go, live here. Carry the Golden Land with you."

The letters that he wrote from Pushkar (some of them reproduced below in Chapter XVI), to different people were written mostly basking in the winter sunshine on the roof of his house, and they have still in them enclosed the sunshine of his heart. On critically reading his prose and poetry of this period,

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I think his best poetry is in these and other short letters that he has written to his friends from time to time, more than in his metrical compositions. And after these letters of his, come his selections of Urdu and Persian couplets and Gazals, in which we smell the fragrance of the soul of this great flower-gatherer himself.

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CHAPTER XIV

SWAMI RAMA AT BEAS ASHRAM ON THE GANGES

HE would get tired, spent up by his public lectures in the plains and he would fly from society into the mountainous solitudes which he loved. And he would take great trouble in fixing up a spot for his solitary residence in the forests. Once he chose a plateau on the less frequented forest side bank of the Ganges, a little above Rishikesh on the way towards Badri Narayan called Beas Ashram, and he grew a beard while staying here for about a year. Whoever went to see him he told him: "Rama has got the beard of Vyasa." Here he began the systematic study of Sanskrit Grammar and literature including Shankara's Bhashya and the Vedas. Swami Rama while lecturing on his Vedanta at Allahabad and Benares was cut to the quick by the challenge of the Sanskrit Pandits of these places, that without being a Pandit of Sanskrit, how dared he preach the Philosophy of Vedanta? The poet in him was bitten, the student in him rose supreme in reply and determined that he would now know by sheer dint of hard labour, every one of the Vedic Mantrams, and he

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would go through the Sanskrit literature on Vedanta according to the orthodox system. And so he did. The Pandits who met him after his residence at Beas Ashram saw the miraculous change, he was a scholar imbued with the orthodox spirit of traditional interpretations of Vedas, combined with his acquaintance with the methods of Western criticism and research.

But this study of Sanskrit killed Swami Rama, it benumbed his gay bird-like spirit, it made a poet into a moody philosopher. On the commencement of his study, I had the temerity to address him a letter reminding him that his Pandit critics were dead, and why should he smart under their ignorant criticism, and ruin his own joy, by getting into the stale and musty atmosphere of old Sanskrit Grammar? To this he replied: "Rama has a lot of energy left and why not spend it in learning Sanskrit."

From Beas Ashram onward, he lived in the philology of the Sanskrit words and grammatical constructions and immersed in enjoying the beauty of the Vedic Mantrams. He laughed heartily at the wrong translations and misinterpretations of Vedas, introduced in certain quarters in India in the absurd faith of the infallibility of Vedas, and in the still more absurd effort of proving them to be the text books on modern science also, and remarked: "Every one has the right to interpret for himself anything as he likes. For example, Rama takes the wine of Hafiz to mean divine intoxication, and taking it in this way, Rama enjoys the divine wine of Hafiz in

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his own way. But he has no right to give this meaning to the word used. Similarly, no one has any right to depart from the traditional meanings of the Vedic Sanskrit." And Swami Rama considered Sayanacharya to be the sole guide to the Vedas. He admired the method of the European scholars. He condemned the indolent ignorance of the Hindu Pandits. He said to me at Vashishtha Ashram "Rama intends to write a book on the Vedas giving all the beautiful pieces both with the traditional meanings and with Rama's own interpretations." "The other day, Rama was sitting on a slab of stone, the skies were overcast and it was drizzling ! Rama had just had his bath and felt that Rama was a woman waiting for God as her very Man, and Rama felt the quiver of the divinest passion tingling in his blood and every nerve of his rang like a fiddle string. The scenes of nature assumed the most amorous colouring : Rama the woman was waiting passively with divine expectant joy for God, the Man. And a prayer rose in Rama's heart ! "Come O God ! I wish to conceive Thee and bear Thee in my womb. I wish to draw the life-juices from Thee." When he woke to study his Veda and opened the book to read any Mantram that may chance to come first on any page that may by itself open on opening the book, Rama was struck to see the Mantram of the day describing exactly the state of mind in which Rama was that morning. It is in this way that Vedas should be read and interpreted to oneself, and they should be interpreted in their traditional meaning in a scholarly way. The

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traditional meanings, of course, must and always, do lend themselves to a thousand progressive interpretations as the human mind and its ideas progress, just as the Bible with its original text intact is undergoing before our very eyes a hundred interpretations according to the ideas of the times.

During this period of life, Swami Rama was imbued with the spirit of Shankaracharya's great Philosophy of Illusion, and this spirit seemingly had sapped the foundations of that living joy in him. It should be admitted, that he had given up the food he used to draw from the Persian and English literatures. The study of Sanskrit philology and grammar starved him to death. Whatever might have happened ever since he began studying Sanskrit philology and grammar that inspiration, that *Avesh* began retiring from his body and mind. And I have no doubt his death by drowning cannot be dissociated from the pessimistic system of thought he had begun to harbour. He was by no means happy at Vashishtha Ashram, where he had gone from Beas Ashram, and was seen by me still indulging in Sanskrit grammar.

In those days, he was busy writing articles. He had asked for a duplicator which I took with me. His writings of that period lay an emphasis on *Bhakti*, which he never laid before in his public utterances.

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The hill-men near Vashoon came and offered him milk and fruit. I had talks with them and they said: "Swami is a Deo (God)—not a man." They understood not a word of his philosophy, but they made him a hut to live in, in one day, and they brought him offerings and talked to him with smiling faces as his veritable comrades.

Missing very much his hilarity and laughter and vitality, I had the temerity to ask him, "Swamiji! why are you changed so much. You are distinctly sad."

"Puranji! The world is concerned only with my blossoms, and they taste me when I appear before them in my flowers. But they do not know, how much I have to labour underground, in the dark recesses, in my roots that gather the food for the flowers and the fruits. I am now in my roots. Silence is greater work, than the fire-works of preaching and giving off our thoughts to the world. It is the silence of *Gaurpada* and *Gobind Acharya*, that was at the back of the brilliant success of Shankara Acharya."

In those days, I thought, and I think still, that his exegetical studies in original Sanskrit instead of being of any help to him, deepened his depression, and increased his sorrow of Illusion. He was distinctly below the mark; more a philosopher than a poet.

He was nearing the Hindu Ideal of a Vedantic philosopher, and would sit cross-legged for days and days unaffected by the opposites and unconcerned

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with his body. He would say: "Who says there is a world? It never was, never is, and never shall be." And at the same time he would also say "You people come and make Rama believe in you as realities and forget Him. All relations are means of forgetting the Lord." It was evident that as his study of philosophy deepened, it gave him more of sadness in which he would turn his mind to God again and again as a Bhakta. He would still think of Him in no other terms but of Love, to live move and have his being in Him.

On another occasion, while taking a walk on the oak-covered paths, he told me: "You have done well in having married. It is a stable life. Your wife must be your helpmate in realising the Divine. Come up, both of you, give up the world and live on these hill-tops. You could occupy any other peak, a few miles distant from Rama, as Rama occupies one here."

I don't remember how the talk strayed into the coming of his wife and child at Hardwar when he said: "How divine was the face of Brahmananda's mother. She looked transfigured that day, did she not?"

"You remember Rama told you to send Rama's family people away at Hardwar and you got so enraged. Rama too has a heart but at that time he thought of obeying the laws of the robe he was wearing. It was a formal refusal on his part to see them. How can man forget his personal relations, when emotion still stirs in his breast, be it for God

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Swami Rama in America

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or for man. The poets cannot be petrified into unfeeling stones. Spiritual development does not mean insensateness. They killed Keats by harsh words only. The greater the development, the greater the feeling."

"Puranji! Rama never knew that this ochre garb is no more the symbol of freedom in this country. Slaves have begun to wear these robes and they have made it so formal, so conventional that Rama feels impatient about it now. When he next goes down to the plains, in a full assembly, he will tear his robe into pieces in public and announce that the orange robe of the Sanyasi is no more the vehicle of freedom."

How strangely enough, he had discarded this colour at Vashishtha Ashram. He had a grey *Patu* wear and a black brown merino turban. He had trousers and a *Kurtâ* and not the flowing robes of the Sanyasi.

"Does not Rama look now as a *Maulvi* with a huge Imama (Moslem turban)?" said he.

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CHAPTER XV

THE LAST DAYS: AT VASHISHTHA ASHRAM

(UTTRA KHAND, HIMALAYAS)

HE was now quite changed; that hilarity had gone! —that bursting, bubbling flow of cheerfulness had sunk deep! He would slip now and then while walking and fall and say: "Ah! Rama had just forgotten his Beloved, so he has fallen, otherwise there can be no fall. We slip first within and then we fall without. The outward fall is only contingent. Always take care within. Not a breath to pass without the Beloved. Fill your breath with Him." And in the evenings, he would burst forth singing and clapping his hands and dancing. He looked a veritable Vaishnava and he faintly reminded one of the semblance of the Hari-dances of Chaitanya. Bhakti was predominant in his bosom and it was in these days, that he wrote his introduction to the Hindi booklet on prayer by the late Judge Baijnath. This piece of writing truly registers the condition of his mind at Vashishtha Ashram.

While bathing one day he said: "If Vedanta is fully realised, this physical body can be made

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everlasting." But I did not understand him. I think he said something the meaning of which was not quite clear even to himself.

He was a great reader and I had taken a few books for him. He would be sitting in his hut or lying down and I would draw his attention to those books and take one of them and give it into his hands. But I found it had become difficult for him to read anything and the book would drop from his hands, tears would roll down from his eyes and a few sweet sad words come out and say "Rama cannot read any more." Was it self-exhaustion or deeper self-absorption?

Swami Narayan, his disciple contended that it was due to dyspepsia, and the wrong kind of food that he was having and held many a bitter talk in his wild love for him, to bring the Swami to his views.

Swami Narayan actually grew impatient with the Swami's laziness. One day we all resolved to go to Buddha Kidar glaciers *via* Poali Kanta, and Swami agreed to go. We started. We climbed the Vishoon top, and reaching the extensive grassy plateau above the snow line late towards the evening, we came near a shepherd's hut, and the shepherd refused all hospitality and would not let us in. I beseeched him, and Swami Narayan too beseeched him to no purpose. However when Swami Rama walked straight in and with him every one, the shepherd welcomed us gladly enough. We spent a good night under the mat tent of the shepherd. In the morning, Swami Rama stood outside, showing me the

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sublimest vision of the Himalayan glaciers from Badri Narayan to Jamnotri and their superb engoldenment by the rising sun. While there, I found Swami Rama was not willing to proceed further, as he thought this tramping, tramping aimlessly useless. "What use is travelling on hills, if we forget Him? Blessed is staying at home if we have Him with us." To forestall him, I showed my blistered heels to him and pleaded inability to go further. He called Narayan Swami and said: "Puranji cannot go further, he is not accustomed to long tramps like this, so we must return to our Ashram." "It is folly to fall in company with you fellows," said Swami Narayan to me. "You are so faulty of foot. Swamiji! you do not wish to proceed and you put Puranji as an excuse. I am sure he will go, if you go."

It was fairly bitter, but Swami Rama again said: "Narayanji! we must return." So we all returned.

On many occasions, Swami Narayan would slip into similar bitter discussions and Swami Rama would remind him: "No discussions, please!" He had ordered we should not bring in any personalities in the purview of our talk, if our spirit of bringing them in was adverse intellectual criticism. But many a time every one of us slipped again and again, into such forbidden things.

Once Swami Narayan was mercilessly dissecting a person when Swami Rama reminded him of his standing orders. "No, Swamiji, I am not criticising him, I am only studying the psychology of his

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mind." This caused a great laughter for a long while.

In these days, Swami Rama was very sensitive to criticism himself and in order to suffer no argument from Narayan Swami, he had already asked him to live apart.

A letter reached him here that the Indian police were after him, suspecting him to be a great nationalist who wished to subvert the British Government. He said: "Tell them I do not defend myself. They may treat me as they like. I cannot be other than what I am. I wish as an Indian that my country should be free. Free it shall be one day, but whether this Rama secures its freedom or a thousand other Ramas, no one knows."

On the day of my departure from Vashishtha Ashram, he asked me to bathe him. I took his cocoanut bowl and his towel and followed him to the stream. He was very reluctant to do anything himself. I took off his clothes and made him bare. He got into the stream and I bathed him with my own hands. The sky was cloudy the whole morning and as he came back to his hut, it was time for me to depart. "Puranji! Wherever you go, live in the Golden Land, in the inner light. Carry on the work that Rama has begun, for the time has come for Rama to take the vow of silence—*Maun ho jaiga*."

"Swamiji! When I come, I will tickle your sides and you will laugh and speak and I will break your vow of silence," said I.

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His eyes grew red and he became quite serious and said, "Who can make the silent one speak again." I was almost afraid to say a word further.

We started, he came along to leave me, Narayan Swami whom he asked to accompany us, and another friend, a long way down the hill. He came as he was, with no cover on but a small loin cloth just as he had come out of the stream. It began drizzling. I was full with tears. And when I bowed to him to take a farewell, he suddenly and speedily ran back up the hill without casting back even a look, snapping so to say, with the suddenness all his own, all personal ties with me.

Narayan Swami tells me that when he came down from there, after about a month, to Tehri (Garhwal) and was put up at Simlasu, a sylvan house of the Raja of Tehri as his guest, he asked him to go and get a hut made for him on the banks of the Ganges under his own supervision. And he came to leave Swami Narayan a long way off from that house, giving him exactly the same message which he had given me a month before.

Swami Narayan never saw him again. Nor did I. Both these farewells were the farewells of his approaching death.

He was living at Simlasu and writing articles for the Press. The last he wrote was "The stamped deed of the progress (of men and nations)." And the last para he wrote was in pencil. It was the day of Dewali, a Hindu festival. The Billing Ganga flows down below and on its high raised bank is

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situated this Simlasu house. As usual, he used to go and have his exercise and bath in the Ganges. But one day, having swum across it and having jumped into its current from a high rock, he had hurt his knee, and so for some days previous to this fateful day of Dewali, he was having his bath with the Ganges water brought up to him. On the Dewali day, he again thought of bathing in the river. The last para in pencil was written and laid aside and he went down. He never came up, for he went into the river in breast-deep waters, and as was his wont, closing his nostrils with his fingers, he plunged under the surface of the waters. It seems he lost his foothold. Weak and exhausted physically as he was, by his abstinence from solid food for months and by the painful knee, he could not swim up nor hold his own, especially as he got into a whirl of waters there under the surface. It was after some time that he rose to the surface, and he was seen putting out a little struggle, but it was soon over. His body floated down the river, as if he died, just as he struggled up to the surface by the very exertion.

The paragraph in pencil when translated runs thus:

O Death! Take away this body if you please! I care not. I have enough of bodies to use. I can wear those divine silver threads, the beams of the moon, and live. I can roam as a divine minstrel, putting on the guise of hilly streams and mountain brooks. I can dance in the waves of the sea. I am the breeze that proudly walks and I am the wind inebriated. All these shapes of mine are wandering shapes of change. I came down from yonder

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hills, raised the dead, awakened the sleeping, unveiled the fair faces of some and wiped the tears of a few weeping ones. The bulbul and the rose both I saw and I comforted them. I touched this, I touched that, I doff my hat and off I am. Here I go and there I go, none can find me.

I don't think now, as I thought then, that in this paragraph he was forecasting in any sense his own death. He was writing an article in his own style. But it is remarkable that he should think of death; he thought of it and there he died! The thoughts of death crowding on him in these days, the languor of his sad mind, all tend to show the depression that was on him, which neither I nor any one else had the insight to diagnose, far less to cure.

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CHAPTER XVI

A COLLECTION OF SWAMI RAMA'S LETTERS

SWAMI RAMA was not a very regular correspondent and used to write but rarely. His circle of correspondents too was limited. It was only to the most intimate of his acquaintances or friends towards whom he was drawn by the spiritual bonds of love and sympathy that he indited his messages. A few of such letters, most of them given by Mrs. Wellman are reproduced below.

Letters are a species of literary *hors-d'œuvre* which usually find a place in biography on account of their autobiographical interest. But in the letters of Swami Rama the autobiographical is the very element which is conspicuous by its absence. There is little in them to half conceal and half reveal, as usually letters do, the author's likes and dislikes, predilections and prejudices, his tastes and feelings, his views on men and things, on cabbages and kings. There was little, very little of the personal element in all that Swami Rama wrote or taught and it is no wonder that his letters are practically devoid of any personal touches.

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The letters have all of them one dominant characteristic, they give expression in one way or other to the message which Swami Rama felt called upon to give the world. Each of the letters is a clarion call to live one's life on the Vedantic plane, casting off the coils of the little self. Rama's own life was a perfect exemplification of that ideal, and in each of the letters we find some reflection of that ideal. As Emerson said, "The men of real Power are always men of One Idea, who send all the force of their being along one line." The remark is true in every sense of Swami Rama. He was a man of one idea, not built up of bits and fragments. His being poured along one main powerful channel, undisturbed by any cross currents or subcurrents. Everything he spoke, everything he wrote, everything he did rang with the one divine message he came to deliver to the world.

The letters have also, it may lastly be said, a literary charm of their own. Their literary flavour comes of an extensive reading and a culture as catholic in taste as it was extensive in range. Their literary grace, it may be said, is not the result of assiduous cultivation but the natural and spontaneous expression of a noble and thoughtful personality. Added to their literary grace there is a piquant directness of style which comes of the very fulness of thought finding sudden vent. In the speed of expression, pouring forth a wealth of illustration and argument, there is little time to

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prune and reshape the matter. And it is better so for what may be lost in external polish is more than regained in force and vigour of style.

The following letters were written to Mrs. Wellman.

OM

Shasta Springs, California,

8th October, 1903.

MOST BLESSED DIVINE MOTHER,

. . . Rama thoroughly appreciates every movement of yours. Rama is not selfish enough to misunderstand, nor is there any likelihood of Rama ever forgetting one who has become Rama in her love for India, Truth and suffering Humanity. Surya means the Sun.[1] "Resist not evil" does not mean become a passive nonentity ; no, not at all. The saying has no reference to the acts of the body. It is a commandment touching the mind, and mind alone, inculcating *Peace of mind.* Mental *Resistance*, *opposition* and *revolt* always bring about discord, irritation and worry, instead of "curling up" and consequently unbalancing yourself overcome the seeming evil by Love (Sacrifice, or giving nature) than which there is no higher force.

"Resist not evil," and welcome events with the good cheer of a giver. Great souls never lose their balance. By preserving our calm we can always turn the stumbling blocks into stepping stones. Never, never should you let the feeling of helplessness cross your mind.

Just now the thought comes to Rama that on reaching India you should at your earliest convenience inquire about the whereabouts of Puran who must be somewhere in the Punjab. He is the Editor of the *Thundering Dawn.* No introductory letters are necessary for him.

[1] The reference is to *Suryananda*, the name Swami Rama gave to Mrs. Wellman.

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Hoping you will immediately write to Rama after securing a berth.

Your own pure heroic self as
RAMA SWAMI.

(This letter was written to Mrs. Wellman when she was undergoing a great mental strain in regard to her contemplated journey to India, as much opposition was raised against her going.)

OM!

Shasta Springs, California,
October 10, 1903.

MOTHER DEAR,

Your dear letter with paper and envelopes to hand. (She sent him a box of paper and envelopes.) You will be accorded a hearty welcome when you step on that sympathetic soil (India). Rama has already written to India. In case you go there, you will find your name out-speeding you. You are welcome wherever you want to break journey. . . (Then in answer to a question.) "When we give ourselves up to *levity, frivolity, and jollity,* by an invisible Law of Nature we suffer from the reaction which presses us low down. The wise man keeps his heart always *at home,* and interested only in the One Supreme Reality.

As to the things of the world, he attends to them in the disinterested, dispassionate, indifferent, and self-possessed mood of a munificent princely *giver*.

This noble attitude is kept up in all *active* work. And in reference to *passive* experiences the free soul undergoes them all unaffected, unmoved, and in good cheer, *vividly* remembering all the time his *native glory*. "I am alone the One without a second. The Sun is my semblance." Constant meditation of your own real Surya (Sun) character and applying to it every affair of life makes you the phenomenal Self, the highest manifestation of Love, Light, and Life. You will write to

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Rama before setting sail or embarkation. You should also write when you reach Japan and Hongkong. Rama will be ever so glad to do anything for you in India.

Your noble, lovely self as
RAMA.

OM!

Shasta Springs, California,
October 16, 1903.

MOST BLESSED NOBLE SURYANANDA,

Both your letters came to Rama's hands simultaneously this noon. All is well and satisfactory. As you are going on a long trip, it might prove beneficial for you to add a little more to your knowledge of human nature, and indelibly impress on your mind the importance of keeping ourselves *perfectly* collected, serene, and *at home* all the time. The apparent delays and oppositions are all meant to add to your inner power and purity.[1] Naturalists have decisively shown that no evolution or progress could ever take place had it not been for struggles and opposition.

Do you remember the story of Robert Bruce and the Spider? "Is not every grand discovery preceded by hundreds, nay thousands of unsuccessful attempts?" Early in the morning you would do well to spend about half an hour in repeating to yourself this Mantram (pardon omission of Mantram). Be strongly instilling into your very nature the truth involved in this Mantram while repeating it. This kind of continual auto-suggestion will make a thorough Sanyasin (Swami) of you. You will please soon write as to what arrangements are made about your passage. With deepest love and sincerest regard

Your Own Self,
RAMA SWAMI

---

[1] This was in reference to a delay of a certain matter which gave Mrs. Wellman much uneasiness on the eve of her departure to India.

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OM!

Shasta Springs, California,
October 21, 1903.

MOST BLESSED DIVINE SURYANANDA,

Yours of yesterday just to hand.

O! what a happy news, sailing for India! At Hong-kong, if you call on Wossiamal Assomal (near the Clock Tower), you might delight the Hindu merchants by telling them about the happy state of Rama (Tirath) Swami and your own noble mission.

The people to whom the letters have already been given will furnish you satisfactorily with the information about all local matters. You need only a start, every thing else will run smoothly enough afterwards. Bear one thing in mind. When you happen to visit the people of any sect, never, never, never you attend to, mark, or remember their criticisms of other parties. If you find any spirit of devotion, divine love, charity, or spiritual knowledge *anywhere*, take it up, absorb it, assimilate it, and have no time to pick up any body's jealousy. Don't notice their drawbacks and weaknesses.

Forget not to see Seth Sita Rama in Calcutta. You might also pay a visit whilst in Calcutta to the learned Editor of the *Dawn*, an unassuming, pure, self-denying, devoted, orthodox Vedantin. He also successfully carries on an educational and boarding institution. In Calcutta you could also enjoy the Sankirtan, devotional dance.

Mother India will receive you as always a loving mother does a returning child estranged for years and years. Adieu for the present. Rama is always with you.

Passage to India!
O! we can wait no longer!
We too take ship, O soul!
To you, we too launch out on trackless seas!
Fearless for unknown shores, on waves of ecstasy
To sail. Amid the wafting winds
Carolling free,—singing our song of God!

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Chanting our chant of happy soothing OM !
Passage to India !
Sailing these seas, or on the hills, or walking in the night,
Thoughts, silent thoughts of Time and Space and Death like waters flowing,
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite
Whose air I breathe.
Bathe me, O God in Thee, mounting to Thee
I and my soul to range, in reach of Thee.
Passage to Mother India !
Reckoning ahead, O soul, when Thou the time achieved,
The seas all crossed, weathered the capes, the voyage done,
Surrendered, copest, frontest, God,
Yieldest the aim attained.
As filled with friendship, Love complete,
The Elder Brother found,
The younger melts in fondness in his arms.
Passage to India !
Are thy wings plumed indeed for such far flight
O soul, voyagest thou indeed on voyage like this ?
Soundest below the Sanskrit and the Vedas ?
Then have thy bent unabashed.
Passage to you, your shores, ye aged fierce enigmas,
Passage to you, to mastership of you, you,
Strangling problems.
Passage to mother India,
O secret of earth and sky !
Of you, O waters of the sea !
O winding creeks and Ganges !
Of you, O woods and fields ! Of you O mighty Himalayas,
Of morning red ! O clouds ! O rain and snows,
O day and night, passage to you !
O sun and moon, and all ye stars, Sirius and Jupiter,
Passage to you !
Passage, immediate Passage !
The blood burns in my veins !
Away, O soul, hoist instantly the anchor,
Cut the hawsers—haul out—shake out every sail.

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Have we not stood here like trees in the ground
  long enough?
Sail forth, steer for the deep waters only,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared
  to go,
And we will risk the ship ourselves and all.
O my brave soul!
O father, father, sail,
O daring joy but safe,
O father, father, sail,
To your real Home.

RAMA.

OM!

Chicago, Illinois,
February 15, 1904.

MOST BLESSED SELF,

Your numerous letters, the telegram, and all came duly to Rama's hands. When there is but one Reality, who should thank whom? Rama is filled with joy, Rama is all joy. All the time Rama is all peace. Work flows from Rama. Rama doeth no work. Be thou the fragrant rose, and the sweet aroma will waft of itself all around from thee!

Do you feel yourself a Hindu with your whole heart? Do you realise their errors and superstitions as your own? Could you trust them as your own brothers and sisters? Did you ever forget your American birth and find yourself transfigured into a born Hindu as Rama often sees in himself a deep-eyed bigoted Christian? If so, wonderful work will emanate from you spontaneously!

Who are you? who are you who go to save the *lost*? Are you saved yourself?

Do you know that "whosoever would save his life, must lose it?" Are you then one of the lost? Arise then and be a saviour. Be a sinner—Realise your

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oneness with him, and you can save him. There is no other way but this one way of love, to conquer all.

OM ! OM ! !

Your Own Self as
SWAMI RAMA.

OM !

Minneapolis, M.N., U.S.A.,
April 3, 1904.

MOST BLESSED SELF.

Where are you ? No letter was received from dear noble mother after the happy New Year letter—written from Muttra. Peace, Peace, Peace comes from within. The kingdom of Heaven is *within* alone. In books, temples, prophets, and saints—in vain, in vain the search after happiness. Your experience must have shown it by this time. If the lesson is once learnt, it is not dearly bought, no matter how much it costs. Sit alone, convert your every anguish into Divine Bliss. You may receive inspiring suggestions from books like *The Thundering Dawn*. Meditate on OM ! and be a *giver* of peace to mankind and not an expectant seeker. Dear one, do you remember the last talk Rama gave you on the side of the creek at Shasta Springs ? It was given not as a seeker, but as the perpetual *giver* of Light and Love. Our hearts break when we are in the seeking attitude. You must have verified the state of affairs in India as described in Rama's "Appeal to Americans". Read that lecture once more, if you please. Don't expect any *immediate*, ostensible results from your labour of love. "Be contented to serve," says the spirit of Christ. We cannot receive any gift, benediction or reward higher than the privilege of serving. If you have not met Babu Ganga Parshad Varma, Editor of *The Advocate,* Lucknow, do please see him. Does your heart take more delight in sharing the sufferings of

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poor Hindus in India or in enjoying the comforts of life in America?

* * * * *

Rama was one month in Portland, Oregon, one month in Denver, two weeks in Chicago, and a couple of weeks in Minneapolis. Vedanta societies were organised at these places. Free scholarships for poor Hindu students were secured at different Universities. From here Rama goes to Buffalo, N.Y. Thence to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. On June 29, 30 and 31, Rama is to be at the meetings of the World's Unity League, St. Louis. In July Rama is to be at Lake Geneva. Next fall Rama comes to London, England. Be not discouraged, mother dear. Look only to the sunny side of things. There is no rose without a thorn, unmixed good is not to be found in this world. The All Good is only the self supreme. If India had Vedanta (Truth) in *practice*, what necessity would there have been for appealing to America? When your heart is perfectly attuned to the Beauty of *All*, you will find everything glorious everywhere. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Central Bliss, Inner joy, for ever and for ever.

Your Own Self as
SWAMI RAMA.

OM!

William's Bay, Wis. or Lake Geneva,
July 8, 1904.

MOST BLESSED DIVINE SELF,

Your letters reached Rama. Thank you. Rama understands the situation through and through. Peace, Joy, and success shall ever abide with thee. There is no fear, nor danger, nor difficulty of any kind for a pure soul having cast aside the sense of possession and desire. I stretch myself in the Universe, and rest free! free! The viper in the breast is the little 'I'. Fling it aside,

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and all the world pays you homage. On Rama's return from Minneapolis, a long, type-written letter was mailed to your noble self for publication in the "Practical Wisdom". The subject of the letter was Practical Wisdom. The first meeting of the World's Unity League at St. Louis was opened under Rama's presidency. In addition to Rama's lectures at the Unity League, talks were also given under the auspices of the Theosophical Society and the Church of Practical Christianity at St. Louis, besides some other places. Rama goes to Chicago in a few days, thence to Buffalo, Lily Dale, and Greenacre Maine, and leaves America in or before September.

Peace, Blessings, and Love to all.

Your Own Self as

SWAMI RAMA.

OM!

Jacksonville, Florida,

October 1, 1904.

MOST BLESSED DEAR DIVINITY,

Rama has not written anything to you for some time. It is because

(1) Rama has been ever so busy,

(2) Wrote no letters to any person in India except the few letters for the Press,

(3) Knowing that you were in good hands Rama did not think letters from him needful,

(4) Since leaving Minneapolis Rama received no letters from you.

Peace, Blessings, Love, and Joy abide with you for ever and ever.

In following your own inner voice truly, you can be false to no one. We owe nobody anything. Let our labour be the labour of love. To be ever sound and solvent should be our maxim.

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Let everybody have his or her experience free. The only right we have is to serve and help our fellowmen in *their onward* march. But let the march be really onward and not a make-believe progress. When I help my friends in their spiritual progression, I fall myself with them. Whatever you do, wherever you are, Rama's blessings and love are with you. Day after to-morrow Rama starts for New York. On 8th October most probably embarks on board the *Princess Irene* for Gibraltar. It will probably be some time before reaching India, because there is a likelihood of stopping at many places on the way.

Motto to remember and to practise:

If you know anything unworthy of a friend, forget it.
If you know any thing pleasant about the person,
tell it. His countenance, like richest alchemy,
will change to virtue and to worthiness.

The sun-like attitude of a fearless, continuous *giver*, *serving* without hope of reward, shedding light and life out of free love, living in Divine radiance as God's glory, above all sense of personality, exempt from selfishness, is Salvation and Redemption.

"I eat of the heavenly manna,
I drink of the heavenly wine,
God is within and around me,
All God is for ever mine."

Your Own Self,
SWAMI RAMA.

The following letters were addressed from Pushkar to Mrs. Wellman after Swami Rama's return to India.

OM! OM!

Pushkar,
February 14, 1905.

MOST BLESSED DEAR MOTHER DIVINE,

A Graduate of the Bombay University, a beautiful young man, has offered his life to Rama's work to-day.

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He will stay with Rama assisting in literary work. How good is Providence or dear God. *It* or He never deceives those who work in trust on Him.

Narayana Swami will soon be sent to lecture abroad.

The work in nooks and corners is as grand as the work in the bright centres. In a Persian wheel, the small toothlike wooden support (called *Kutta* in Hindustani) is just as important as the oxen. The whole mechanism cannot stand if the poor wooden support be taken off. Nay, every nail attached to the spokes is of paramount importance. What if children do not make use of such apparently small things. In the eyes of God work however humble is just as grand when done in the spirit of Love. The puny dew-drop appears nothing before the *glorious* Sun, but the observant eye sees that this very tiny drop *reflects* the whole of the solar orb in its sweet little bosom. So, my blessed dear mother, soft, silent work in neglected quarters unknown to name and fame is just as noble and indispensable as loud noisy work which attracts the attention of all mankind. I had been despondent over the little I seemed to be doing. "They also serve who only stand and wait." The mother swathes the tender babe and when Time brings him to the University and the Professor lectures to the grown-up boy, the mother's role is not so high-flown and reputation-bearing as that of the Professor. Nevertheless the mother's duty is far more sweet and important than the Professor's. We cannot suffer the maternal lap and lullaby in childhood to be replaced by the Professor's room and lectures.

Vedanta requires a common coolie to look upon his humble labour to be just as important and sacred as that of a Christ or Krishna. When we move one leg of a chair, do we not move the whole chair? So when we raise or elevate one soul, we raise and ennoble the whole world through him, so rigid is the solidarity of Man.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful in what state God's other work may be, in their own tasks pouring all their powers, these attain the mighty life you see."

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O air-born voice! long since severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear.

Resolve to be thyself; *and know that he who finds himself, loses his misery.*

OM!

Joy! Joy! OM! Peace! Blessings! Love!

RAMA

Pushkar, District Ajmer,

February 22, 1905.

OM! Peace! Blessings! Love! Joy!

MOST BLESSED DIVINE MOTHER,

Your sweet, heavenly letter received. It is indeed wonderful *unison* with God, and marvellous harmony with Love, to have such beautiful control over the physical as blessed Suryananda has.[1]

OM! Joy! Jai! Jai!

* * * * *

Your Own Self as
SWAMI RAMA TIRATH.

Pushkar, Ajmer District.

OM! Joy! Joy! OM! Peace.

BLESSED MOTHER DIVINE,

Rama had been lying on the roof where you sat with him.

* * * * *

[1] Mrs. Wellman had been ill and healed by divine power.

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Lost in Divine consciousness, unconscious till your letter along with some letters was brought and placed in Rama's hands. A long, hearty and happy laughter was sent to your blessed self, before opening the letter. OM! Peace! Peace! Peace! Dearest Mother, Rama sends you another peal of joyful laughter after reading your sweet letter.

Mother, you are all right every way, and Rama thoroughly understands your pure, sweet, tender gentle nature. Rama is writing—prose and some poetry—on different subjects according to God's diction.

Babu Ganga Parshad Varma was to go out to other provinces in India, visiting the girl's schools and watching the Female Education System abroad, with the view of introducing speedy Female Education Reforms in Lucknow and elsewhere. This work was entrusted to him by the Local Government. For this reason he could not come to see Rama before March. Rama probably won't stay on the plains in the summer. Rama loves Kashmir and would highly enjoy your benign company and that of Rai Bhawani Das and other friends. Rama's presence and talks would benefit innumerable hungry souls, if Rama could go with you to Kashmir. But, mother divine, the highest privilege that a person can enjoy is the continuous burning of the heart, mind, body and all at the altar of *Truth* and *Humanity*, and this is the way acceptable to the Supreme Spirit in the form of the *impersonal*, unadulterated, small, still voice from *within*.

"If Duty calls to brazen walls,
How base the fool who flinches."

Mother, consecrated life often is led by some mysterious Divine reason that cannot be analysed.

Rama may accompany you to Kashmir but nothing definite can be said till the very moment of departure.

Your Own Self,

RAMA TIRATH.

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OM !

Jaipur,
March 9, 1905.

MOST BLESSED DEAREST DIVINITY,

Your prophecy about Rama's coming has proved true in so far that Rama has left Pushkar. Which way Rama goes from here, he leaves in the hands of the Supreme Providence (the Surya of Suryas) to decide when the time comes. Two lectures were delivered in Ajmer Town Hall. They are going to arrange for Lectures in the Town Hall at Jaipur. Puran had been to Pushkar, and wandered with Rama on the hills for two or three days. How sweet is Diljang Singh. People are coming in crowds to see Rama, and this must be closed. God and I !

All this day we will go together, the night ever insatiate of love we will sleep together and rise early and go forward in the morning wherever the steps shall lead, in solitary places or among the crowd, it shall be well. We shall not desire to come to the end of the journey nor consider what the end may be. Is not the end of all things with us already ?

OM ! OM ! OM !

Soon will Rama be beyond the reach of letters in forests, on hills, in God, in you. Don't know when next you may hear from

Your Own Self,
RAMA.

Peace, Blessings, Love betide Thee for ever.

OM !

Hardwar,
Thursday Evening.

MOST BLESSED DEAR MOTHER,

Your prophecy has come out true and Rama is coming to Dehra and his Divine mother. But people out of extreme love stopped Rama at several places on the

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way. Lectures have been delivered at Alwar, Moradabad, Ajmer and Jaipur. Rama stopped at Hardwar, parting company on the train with our beloved, blessed Babu Jyotis Swarupa. The people here have come to know about Rama's presence, and they most lovingly implore Rama to prolong his stay. Rama also does not think it worth while to lose this opportunity to do what he can to improve the condition of the youthful Sadhus and others who are wonderfully receptive and hungry for anything proceeding from Rama. Work among the Sadhus, mother, is just what you wanted Rama to undertake, when we met at Muttra. Very lovely Swamis are taking to Rama's teachings.

Rama went up to the temple of Chandi on the opposite bank of the Ganges to-day. The temple lies on the top of a lovely little hill. The forest on that side of the river is very thick and the scenery most picturesque. The view of the Ganges, as branching into scores of streams, and returning is extremely beautiful. The Himalayan glaciers present a golden or diamond spectacle from Chandi's Temple.

Blessed One,

Neither praise nor blame,
Neither friends nor foes,
Neither loves, nor hatred,
Neither body, nor its relations,
Neither home, nor strange land.

No! Nothing of this world is important. God is! God is real, God is the only reality.

Let everything go. God, God alone is the all in all. Peace immortal falls as rain drops. Nectar is dropping in the rain drops. Rama's mind is full of peace. Joy flows from me.

Happy is Rama, and ever happy
Are you, dear mother. Peace! Blessings!
Love! Joy! Joy! OM! OM! OM!
Love, Blessings, joy to your pupils, hostess and host (Babu and Mrs. Jyotis Swarupa).

Your Own Self,

RAMA.

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July 5, 1905.

MOST BLESSED DEAR SELF,

Rama's letter sent about a week ago to your Mussoorie address may have reached your noble self before this. Rama cannot go to Kashmir this summer. So you may leisurely enjoy your pleasure trip to Kailas, Man Sarowar, and other places. In the picturesque mountain scenes, you will surely feel at home at the sight of landscapes reminding you of the scenes earlier in life in blessed America.

Rama is very happy!
In the floods of life, in the storm of deeds up and
    down I fly,
Hither, thither weave,
From birth to grave
An endless web.
A changing sea
Of glowing life.
Thus in the whistling loom of time
I fly weaving the living robe of Deity.

OM!

Your Own Self,
RAMA.

August 10, 1905.

Blessings! Love! Joy!
Peace! Peace!

MOST BLESSED DEAR MOTHER.

Your letter was received a few days ago. But Rama has replied to no letters lately. To-day are finished three very useful books that Rama has been writing in the Vernacular for the people. How is your health now? Rama wishes you perfect health and strength.

OM! OM! OM!

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To arrange for your passage to America is after all not a hard matter, but we want you to remain with us. Perhaps it is selfish, but you also love the people here. Are you sure that the feebleness of the physique is due only to the Indian climate, and return to America will certainly do you good? If so, none of us should insist on keeping you here. We should all help to see you arrive safely in California.

Peace! Heartfelt Blessings! Love!
Hope this letter will see you in good health.

OM!

RAMA.

Following are some of the letters written by Swami Rama to Mrs. Pauline Whitman, her mother and her sister. Swami Rama in his own way used to call Mrs. Pauline Whitman Kamalananda and her mother Champa.

OM!

15th September, 1903.

DEAREST BABY KAMALA,[1]

You are pure, faultless, and Holy of holies. No blame, no spot, no taint of worldliness, no fear, no sin.

If you never mind, you might put into verse the following thoughts. The attempt to do so will keep you on blessed heights.

These are translated from a Persian poem that Rama wrote this morning. You might versify them while in Portland or Denver. Just suit yourself.

You have every right to modify the ideas.

[1] Kamalananda—Mrs. Pauline Whitman.

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1. Rage wild and surge and storm, O ocean of Ecstasy, and level down the Earth and heavens. Drown deep and shatter and scatter all thought and care. O ! what have I to do with these ?

2. Come let us drink deep and deeper still. O ! dead drunk, let us weed out the sense of division, pull down the walls of limited existence, and set at large That Unveiled Bliss.

3. Come, madness Divine, quick, look sharp, alack the delay ! My mind is weary of the flesh, O ! let the mind sink, sink in Thee ; spare it prompt, from the consuming oven.

4. Set on fire the *meum* and *tuum* ; cast to the four winds all fear and hope ; climate differentiation ; let the head be not distinguished from the foot.

5. Give me no bread, give me no water, and give me no shelter or rest, Love's precious parching Thirst ; O Thou alone art enough to atone the decay of millions of frames like this.

> The western sky doth seem to glow
> So beautiful bright ;
> Is it the sun that makes it so ?
> Surely it is Thy light.

Your Own Self,

RAMA.

OM

Shasta Springs,

July 22, 1903.

DEAR BLESSED CHAMPA (FLORA),

Perhaps you would not like to be addressed that way. But whether you do or not, Rama feels inclined to call you by that name. In the language of Hindustan every name has a remarkable significance, and the name *Champa* (usually given to girls of noble and high families) literally means sweet-scented, full blown.

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This name naturally and spontaneously occurred to Rama just when the pen was handled to write this letter. It can be written—*Champa* or *Chumpa.*

The other day a long letter was dictated to Kamala (Pauline) in answer to all your queries. Did you receive the letter from her? It contained also some recent poems of Rama.

VEDANTIC DIRECTIONS

1. Vedantic Religion may be summed up in the single commandment:

Keep yourself perfectly happy and at rest, no matter what happens—sickness, death, hunger, calumny, or anything.

Be cheerful and at peace on the ground of your Godhood to which thou shalt ever be true.

2. The world, its inmates, relations, and all are vanishing quantities if you please to assert the Majesty of your real Self.

Inspect, observe and watch or do any thing; but do all that in the light of your True Self, that is to say, forget not that your Self is above all that and beyond all want.

You really require nothing. Why should you feel a desire for anything? Do your work with the grace of a Universal Ruler, for pleasure, fun, or mere amusement's sake. Never, never feel that you want anything.

3. When you live these principles of Vedanta, spontaneously will the sweet aroma of Truth proceed in all directions from you.

Before falling asleep—when the eyes begin to close—every night or noon make a firm resolve in your mind to find yourself an embodiment of Vedantic Truth on waking up.

When you wake up, before doing anything else just bring to your mind vividly the determination dwelt upon before falling asleep.

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Whenever you can, just chant or hum to yourself OM.

This way like a true, genuine Champa you will be shedding delicious fragrance and charming glory all around you all the time.

Yourself as

RAMA SWAMI.

Pushkar, Ajmer District,

February 22, 1905.

MOST BLESSED DEAR DIVINITY,

What a splendid weather where Rama is. Every day a New Year day and every night a Christmas night. The blue heavens are my cup and the sparkling light my wine.

I am the light air in the hills, I pass and pass and pass. From the hills I creep down into the towns and cities—fresh and pervading through all the streets I pass.

Him I touch and her I touch and you I touch—such is my playful amusement.

I am the Light, lovingly I feed my children—the flowers and plants. I live in the eyes and hearts of the beautiful and the strong.

Stay with Me, then I pray;
Dwell with Me through the day
And through the night and where it is neither night or day,
Dwell quietly. Pass, pass not any more.
Thou canst not pass,
I am too where thou art;
I hold thee fast;
Not by the yellow sands nor the blue deep,
But in my heart, thy heart of hearts.

By living in the Light of lights the way opens up of itself. The accurate working of details takes place

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spontaneously (like the opening of the closed petals of a rose-bud) when the genial light of Devotion and divine Wisdom shines free.

It is hoped you received the January issue of *The Thundering Dawn* from Puran, Sutramandi, Lahore.

Your Own Self,

SWAMI RAMA TIRATH.

In the January issue your poems have been published under the name *Kamala Nanda* which is the full Swami name.

When you send any fresh contributions, they will appear under the name 'Ohm' if you like.

Love, Blessings, Joy, Peace to dear blessed Girja and all.

OM ! OM !! OM !!!

Pushkar, District Ajmer, India.

Joy ! Joy ! Joy !
Peace ! Blessings ! Love !
Joy !

DEAREST MOST BLESSED SELF,

On the bank of a calm, clear, and deep, deep lake Rama lives. A long, even-sized, continuous hill lies stretched on one side, wearing a beautiful green shawl all over. Mango groves abound here. There are two little flower gardens in the house where Rama lives. Flights of gorgeous peacocks keep screaming from their metallic throats. Ducks are playfully swimming and diving in the lake. Narayan Swami (the beautiful young man of whom Rama may have spoken to you) is here helping Rama in copying his writings, etc.

This lake is called the Earth's eye. The wooded hills and cliffs are its overhanging brows. It is a mirror

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which no stone can crack, whose quicksilver will never wear off, a mirror in which all impurity presented to it sinks, swept and dusted by the Sun's hazy brush—this the light dust-cloth.

This lake is one of the highest characters Rama has met; how well it preserves its purity! It has not acquired one wrinkle after all its ripples. It is perennially young.

Let such be our hearts.

Here do—

Birds hang and swing, green-robed and red,
Or droop in curved lines dreamily,
Rainbows revered from tree to tree;
Or sing low hanging overhead,
Sing soft as if they sing and sleep,
Sing low like some distant waterfall,
And take no note of us at all.

* * * * *

Peace, Blessings, Love from Your Own Self,

SWAMI RAMA.

The two following letters were written by Swami Rama to Mrs. E. C. Campbell of Denver, Colorado, an ardent disciple of his in America.

Portland, Ore.

To

MRS. E. C. CAMPBELL,

When people set *their heart on anything* and meet with obstacles, then do they get ruffled and upset. The cause of agitation and disturbance without exception is the tendency to resist the seeming *Evil*. Thus, don't you think Christ had his head level when he said, "Resist not Evil?" Keep yourself calm, and receive with good cheer whatever appears to be opposing the current of your desire. When we don't

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lose our balance and remain centred in Self. Rama has always seen through personal experience that the seeming evil turns into good. Don't you remember how those Rs. 10 were sent to a Hindu student after a seeming evil? But by distemper and disguise we shut out upon ourselves the gate of all the blessings, noble thoughts and happy pieces of fortune that might be awaiting us. Overcome all evil and difficulties by a mind carrying the body and worldly life in the palm of its hand, in other words, by giving a mind full of *Love* than which there is no higher force. OM!

Your Own Dear Self as
RAMA SWAMI.

Portland, Ore.

OM! OM!!

To

MRS. E. C. CAMPBELL,

You are constantly remembered by Rama.

You are so sincere, pure, noble, earnest, faithful, and very good! Are you not?

1. To compare or contrast one person with another in the mind,
2. To compare oneself with anybody else mentally,
3. To compare the present with the past and brood over the memory of past mistakes,
4. To dwell upon future plans and fear anything,
5. To set our heart on anything but the one Supreme Reality,
6. To depend on outward appearances and not to practically believe in the inner Harmony that rules over everything,
7. To jump up to the conclusions from the *words*, or seeming conduct of people and to rest thoroughly satisfied with faith in the Spiritual Law,

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8. To be led astray too far in conversation with the people—

It is these that breed discontent in people's mind. Therefore shun these eight sources of trouble. OM!

Your Own Noble Self as

RAMA SWAMI.

In the following letter which Swami Rama wrote to Shiv Guna Acharya he gives the latter to understand in a gentle but firm manner that he (Swami Rama) had a far greater mission to fulfil than to seek a vainglorious and selfish personal advancement. A good commentary on the old text "*cucullus non facit monachum*".

Kishangarh.

NARAYAN,

Doctors say unless we feel appetite from within we should take no food, however delicious and wholesome it may be and however much our dear friends and relatives might coax us to eat it. All that you have written is quite true. If I start at once there is a very good opportunity of enjoying the company of both yourself and the worthy Prime Minister of Kishangarh State, and of being benefitted by your wise counsels. But my inner voice bids me to wait, with the foreboding that even better opportunities shall present themselves when I am fully equipped. Nothing daunted by my former failures—if failures they can be called—I have every hope that abundant success shall attend my future career. What I am doing here is exactly what must have been of our thought of friendly consultation at Kishangarh. We should, no doubt, be always on the alert to avail ourselves of favourable opportunities. But we should not be impatient either. Work is all that is wanted. In order that I may be able to inspire working power or energy into our country-men, I must start with

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a vast store of accumulated energy myself. Let the time come, you shall most certainly be with me.

If I have not to go about making fuss about trifles but have to render some real and lasting service to the Motherland, and if I have to prove truly useful to our country, I feel I require a little more preparation in order to make myself equal to the stupendous task.

I am here making a thorough study of the Shastras and of the highest Western thought and am at the same time pursuing my own independent researches. I have not to spend my lifetime over this work. I shall soon be imparting or rather carrying into the business and bosom of humanity what I have been acquiring at the cost of incessant labour. I have the full conviction that I could if I would long since have caused a tremendous stir in the country but I have a conscience and for no personal glory, no gain, no threats, no imminent danger, not for fear of death even, shall I preach what I have not *realised* to be the Truth.

If the Truth has any power—and certainly it is Infinite Power—the Rajas as well as the Sadhus, the nobility and the populace will all ultimately have to bow before and yield homage to the standard of Righteousness to be set by Rama Tirath Swami. I have an aptitude for this work, and I will be throwing away my powers through haste or impatience if I harness myself for a lesser work.

I have to preach, else why did I fondly cherish that desire from my very childhood. I have to preach, else for what did I renounce my parents, wife, children, worldly position and bright prospects. Filled with the Divine fire I have to preach—boldly, fearlessly, even in the face of all sorts of persecution and opposition—what I am realising here.

Thankfully I accept your advice of keeping the money for my future use.

Regular exercise taken. Health good. Climate most excellent.

Wishing you and the Baboo Sahib,
Shanti ! Shanti ! Shanti !

RAMA TIRATH SWAMI.

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The following are some of his letters to Swami Narayan which were condensed for publication under the title "The Law of Life Eternal". After all, this writing is of a sad mind and was written after Swami Rama's return from America. This writing has not in it that joyous fragrance of his Japanese or American addresses.

Rama lays claim to no mission. The work is all God's. What have we to do with the examples and precedents of Buddha and others ? Let our minds respond to the direct dictates of the Law. But even Buddha and Jesus were forsaken by all their friends and followers. Thus out of the seven years of the forest life, Buddha passed the last two years entirely alone and then came the effulgent Light, after which disciples began to flock to him and were welcomed. Be not influenced by the thoughts and opinions of well-meaning respectable advisers. If their thoughts had been at one with the Law, they might have created shiploads of Buddhas by this time.

Slowly and resolutely as a fly cleans its legs of the honey in which it has been caught, so we must remove every particle of attachment to forms and personalities. One after another the connections must be cut,-the ties must snap, till the final concession in the form of death crowns all unwilling renunciations.

Mercilessly rolls on the wheel of Law. He who lives the Law, rides the Law. He who sets up his will against God's will (*i.e.,* the Law) must be crushed and suffer Promethean tortures.

The Law is fire, it burns up all worldly attachments, it scorches the ignorant mind, yet it purifies and destroys all kinds of pestilential plague germs which attack the spirit.

Religion is as universal and vitally connected with our being as the act of eating. The successful atheist knows not the process of his own digestion, as it were. The Law makes us religious at the bayonet's point. The

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Law flogs us up to wakefulness. There is no escape from the Law. The Law is real and all else is unreal. All forms and personalities are mere bubbles on the ocean of the Law. Reality has been defined as *that which persists.* Now, nothing in the world of forms, no relationships, no bodies, no organisations, no societies could ever persist so tenaciously as this Law of the Cross.

Why do deluded, short-sighted creatures love appearances (personalities) more than the Ideal Law? Because through ignorance persons and other appearances seem to them persistent realities, and the Law an intangible evanescent cloud.

Through hard knocks, and painful bumps, they may be saved if they happen to learn the lesson which Nature intends to teach, *viz.*, that *the cross*, is the only Reality and all personalities and objects of affection are passing phantoms, merest shadows, fictitious ghosts. The apparent bitters and sweets, the seeming beauties and monstrosities are only masks put on by the Biharee Ji (the Playful One) to open our eyes to His Glory at last.

When we believe in the forms of foes and friends as real, they deceive and betray us. But we make the matters still worse when we begin to retaliate and impute to them motives and evil natures. The first faithlessness on their part was due to our assigning through love that reality to them, which belongs to God alone. Now that we resent, we intensify our previous error through hatred assigning still greater reality to their forms and thus invite more pain. Beware! This (Perfect Renunciation, Siva) is the ultimate purpose in life. It is a living reality, something more concrete than stones, and well might it be represented by some Lingam. It strikes harder than stones to correct the forgetful mind. To remember it perpetually is of vital necessity.

Muhammadans and Christians are not wrong in calling this Law or God, Ghayyar (jealous) and Qahhar (Terrible). Indeed, it is no respecter of persons. Let any one set his heart on any thing whatever of this world, and the wrath of Nature must perforce be visited upon him. If people are slow in learning this Truth, it is because they have little power of correct

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observation; they usually, in matters concerning their own personality, do not like to see the cause in the phenomenon itself and they would readily blame others for their own faults and know not to retrospect as a disinterested witness their own moods of passion and feeling and the consequences these entail. Betrayed we must be when we trust the forms, or when in our heart of hearts we give that honour to false things and personalities which is due only to the One Reality, *i.e.*, when we let idols sit on the throne of our hearts instead of God. The method of *agreement and difference* establishes the Law of the Unsubstantiality of Not-God, knowing no exception.

How often are we not the cause of perfect gentlemen no longer remaining as good as their word, by setting our heart on their promises, and believing in them more than in God? How often do we not bring about the death or ruin of our children by the Law-forgetting love for their bodies (forms)? How often do we not make friends faithless by depending on them and placing in their persons that innermost faith which is due to God alone—*i.e.*, *The Jealous Law*? How often do we not bring living Gurus down from their spiritual heights by making them trust in us and our faith in them, whereas the Law must make us deny them even more than "three times before the cock crows"? How often is not our heart-dependence on wives the cause of domestic strifes and of far worse scenes? Take anything more serious than God, and Divine Love must stab you with a piercing glance.

To talk of no unworthy loves, let us take the case of the Gopikas who set their hearts on the fascinating form of God-Incarnate, and yet they had to shed bitter tears of blood for their mistake. That embodiment of chaste affection, Sita, believed in the reality of the *form* glorious of Divine Rama yet she, O even *she*! had to pay for the error in being driven into the hissing forests by the Jealous formless Rama or the Real Rama, her Master, the Lord of each and all.

* * * * *

It is true Muhammad has been misunderstood and often wrongly followed, but any one who sees the Truth,

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Gorakhpur
Sep. 22, '05

Most Blessed dear Self

Yours of the 13th inst. reached Rama today. Rama expects to visit Hardwar during the first week of October and will be very glad to see you. Puran will also be with Rama there.

Peace! Blessings! Love!

Yours in Self

(Swāmī) Rāma

A facsimile letter of Swami Rama

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must reverently bow before the idea, although only one-sided, of putting an immediate end (by the sword) to the lingering, chronic tortures of those who are dying by inches through practical non-belief in the only Truth "There is no Reality but God". Christ teaches practically the same lesson, Buddha the same, and, of course, every one of our own Rishis in one form or another preaches the same thing. But what of that, their preachings and teachings could never have survived if they had not found hearty response in the private experiences of those who heard them, and if they had not been borne out, verified, and time and again re-discovered by the truthful, sincere devotees of the Light in all ages.

The Law of Renunciation is a stern Reality. No flimsy phantom this! Nations could not be all deluded and carried away by the mere chimerical hallucinations of prophets and leaders. Centuries and centuries could not be run away with by the mere fancy of poor cranks.

People not knowing the real cause of their miseries, which is falling out of tune with the Law, begin to fall foul of the outside symptoms of their malady, *i.e.*, the apparent circumstances.

Let the good or bad talk or conduct of people be washed out of consciousness even as misty dreams are consigned to oblivion. Dreams may be nightmares or sweet dreams, we do not try to adjust them or quarrel with them; but rather our own stomach it is that is straitened. So good or bad folks that meet us ought to be entirely ignored, and our spiritual condition improved. Let not any seeming evil or luck stand between thee and God. There are no insults immense enough to satisfy me in the act of forgiving them.

Let nothing be prized higher than God, nothing valued equally with God. Compliments, criticisms and diseases are equally fatal if we regard the Self as subject to them. Feel yourself God and sing songs of joy in Godhead. Look upon compliments and criticisms even as Rama looks upon physical ailments merely as footmen from God's Durbar who with all the authority of the supreme Government say—"Get out of this house, *i.e.*,

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body-consciousness, at once!" They obey me when I occupy the Durbar throne; they whip and stab me when I enter into this hovel—the body-consciousness.

Even Governments whose so-called Laws do not conform to the divine Law of the *Trishul* (or the cross), work their own destruction. Shylock-like laying stress on personal rights, thinking this or that mine, feeling a sense of possession, saying "the law grants it" is to contradict the real Law according to which the only *haq* (right, prerogative) we have, is *Haq* (God) and every other right is wrong. If nobody else recognises this principle the Sanyasin at any rate ought to work it into life.

The Law is all pervasive, it is the higher Self of each and all, and it is Rama in this sense. Yet it must kick out and kill out the personal self. It is cruel but its cruelty is the quintessence of love, because in this very death of the apparent self consists resurrection of the real Self and life eternal. He who keeps the false self and claims for it the prerogatives of the King-Self, must, as it were, be devoured by vultures on the height of vanity. The freedom of Vedanta is not immunity from Law for the limited local self, *i.e.*, personality and body. This is turning GOD into the very reverse. Millions of beings perish every hour through this mistake. Thousands of heads are sinking into pessimism, and hundreds of thousands of hearts are breaking every minute, by the foolish reversal of the order of the Law. Freedom from Law is secured by becoming the Law, that is, the realisation of Shivoham.

That dupe of the senses who counts what are called facts and figures, and rests on the foundation of forms, builds on the foam and sinks. He builds on the rock in whose heart of hearts,

God is Real, the world unreal
And the Law a living force.

* * * * *

In Vedic days, on certain occasions, unmarried girls assembled round the Fire with folded hands, turned round

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the blazing one and sang this song: " Let us be absorbed in the worship of the Fragrant One, the All-seeing One, the Husband-knowing One. As a seed from the husk, so may we be freed from bondage here (the parents' house), but never, never from there (the husband's home)."

That prayer of the ancient Aryan maidens is springing deep from the very bottom of Rama's heart, and tears, O! tears are pouring madly along with it.

O God! O Law! O Truth! let this head and heart be instantaneously rent asunder, if any other connection lodges there but Thee. Let this blood be curdled immediately, if any other idea flows in the arteries and veins along with it but Thee. Another *Shruti*:

"As a woman of a man, so shall I learn of Thee, I shall draw Thee closer and closer, I will drain Thy lips and the secret juices of Thy body, I will conceive of Thee, O Law! O Liberty!"

Is not Rama married to the *Trishul*, married to Truth and Law, that other attachments and other connections are still expected of him as of a harlot?

"I own no other as my King but He the Beloved Krishna."—*Mira Bai.*

* * * * *

People hesitate to love God, because they think they receive no response from Him as in the case of fictitious worldly objects of love. It is foolish ignorance that thus deludes them. O Dear! His breast instantaneously, nay, simultaneously heaves with my breast in responsive impulse.

Look not in apparent friends and foes for the cause of their conduct. The real causation rests with your real self alone. Look out!

As a little bird just learning to fly, leaving one stone or twig, perches on another similar support, then on another and another, but cannot leave entirely those ground objects and soar into the higher air, so a novice

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in *Brahmajnana* while disengaging his heart from one thing or disgusted with a particular person, immediately rests on something else, then clings to another similar delusion, does not give up dependence on frail reed or straw, and quits not in his heart the whole earth. An experienced *Jnani* would turn the apparent faithlessness of one earthly object into a stepping stone for a leap into the Infinite. The art of religion consists in making every little bit of experience an occasion for a leap into the Infinite. The seeming things being all of a piece, while giving up one thing outwardly he makes it a sign and a symbol for renouncing all inwardly.

Deplorably dense must he be who does not recognise the piercing Truth that Death of the selfish personality alone is the Law of life. The *Trishul* shakes off personalities. The shaking off of personalities is the Resurrection of Life Eternal. Live ye for ever! Farewell.

Here are a few letters that he wrote from time to time to various people while touring in India.

Muzaffarnagar,

18th October, 1905.

SWEETHEART,[1]

Great Heart,

Ashes smeared to the hands wash clean the skin.

So, thrice blessed are physical ailments, when they rub away along with themselves the skin-consciousness.

O welcome illness and pain!

So long as the dead carcase is left in the house, there is every danger of all kinds of pests; when the corpse is

[1] This letter was written by Swami Rama to the Author.

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removed, health reigns supreme. Just so, as long as body-consciousness is cherished, we invite every malady in the world. Burn away the body and its bearings, and immediately we enjoy unrivalled Sovereignty.

Hurrah! Hurrah!
No jealousy, no fear;
I'm the dearest of the dear.
No sin, no sorrow;
No past, no morrow.

The learned Mahatmas with hair-splitting heads and prominent bellies,

The spectacled Professors astonishing the innocent students in the Laboratory or the observatory,

The bare-headed orators striking dumb their audience from their pulpits or platforms,

Even the poor rich full of complaints of one kind or another—

All these I am.
The heavens and stars,
Worlds near and far,
Are hung and strung,
On the tunes I sung;
No rival no foe!
No injury, no woe!
No, nothing could harm me.
No, nothing alarm me.
The soul of the Nectar-fall,
The Sweetest Self,
Yea! health itself.
The prattling streams,
The happiest dreams,
All myrrh and balm,
Raman and Ram,
So pure, so calm,
Am I, am I.

RAMA.

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OM!

Joy! Blessings! Peace! Love!

(*Darjeeling side*),

30th August, 1905.

MOST BLESSED DEAREST ONE,[1]

For three months Rama was on the summit of a mountain (about 8,000 ft.) opposite the world's highest mountain, *viz.*, Mt. Everest. Day after to-morrow will go down to the plains. Five books have been written here and twenty books read.

Rama's mind is brimful of joy and peace.

The world has as it were entirely vanished from the mind.

God, God alone
Everywhere!
Within, without
Far and near!

O Joy!
Thrilling peace!
Undulating Bliss!
What a heaven!

Peace! Blessings! Love!

Health spiritual, mental and physical, and all that is good to Girija, Champa, and others dear to you.

Peace immortal falls as rain drops.
Nectar is dropping in musical rain.
Drizzle! Drizzle! Drizzle!

My clouds of glory, they march so gaily!
The worlds as diamonds drop from them.
Drizzle! Drizzle! Drizzle!

[1] Addressed to Mrs. Whitman.

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My breezes of Law blow rhythmical, rhythmical.
Lo! Nations fall like petals, leaves.
Drizzle! Drizzle! Drizzle!

My balmy breath, the breeze of Law,
Blows beautiful! beautiful!
Some objects swing and sway like twigs,
And others like the dewdrops fall.
Drizzle! Drizzle! Drizzle!

My graceful light, a sea of white,
An ocean of milk, it undulates.
It ripples softly, softly, softly;
And then it beats out worlds of spray!
I shower forth the stars as spray!
Drizzle! Drizzle! Drizzle!

RAMA.

OM! OM! OM!

Peace! Blessings! Love! Joy! Joy!

(*Darjeeling side*),

MOST BLESSED DEAR DIVINITY,[1]

Perhaps you know already Rama is in the hills about a thousand miles from Mussorie. Rama lives all alone in an old house belonging to the Bengal Forest authorities. Away from the railway line, removed from the Post Office, beyond reach of visitors and callers, surrounded by a scenery among the richest in the world, with beautiful rills, and a spring running at short distance from it, and when the weather is fair, commanding a distant view of the world's highest mountain, Mt. Everest. Even here fresh milk is brought to Rama by the mountaineers living in the woods. Walks in the woods and study fill up Rama's time.

What are name, fame, ambitions, wealth, achievements and all when "man in the woods with God may meet"? Why should we catch and cherish the *fever of doing?*

[1] Addressed to Mrs. Wellman.

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Let us be divine. The morning breeze blows and is not anxious how many and what sort of flowers bloom. It simply blows on everything and those buds that are full ripe to sprout, open their eyes. The dens of lions, the burning jungles, the dingy dungeons, the earthquake shocks, the falling rocks, the storms, battlefields and the gaping graves, if accompanied by God-consciousness in us, are far sweeter than pomp, honour, glory, thrones, luxuries, retinue and all, when with these a man is not *himself,* in inner solitude *one with the One without a second.* Oh! the joy of the finished purpose, light steps going about making every step our goal, every night the bodily death and every day our new life.

Farewell, friends, and part,
The mansion-universe is too small,
I and my love alone will play.
Oh! The joys of swimming together!
Together? No.
The joy of swimmers dissolved rolling as the ocean!

Joy! Joy!

OM!

Your Own Self, OM.

OM!

Vashishtha Ashram,
27th March, 1906.

MOST BLESSED DIVINITY,[1]

Peace like a river is flowing to me,
Peace as the breezes is blowing to me,
Peace like the Ganges flows—
It flows from all my hair and toes.
Let surging waves of oceans of peace
Leave all the hearts and heads and feet!
OM Joy! OM Bliss! OM Peace!

[1] Letter addressed to Rai Sahib Baij Nath.

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This Ashram is above the snowline. A beautiful stream, called Vashishtha Ganga flows just below Rama's cave. There are five or six waterfalls in the stream. Natural basins are carved out of the hard rocks in the river valley by Shiva's own hands, forming about twenty lovely little tanks. The hills are covered with those true, light-loving, hardy giants of the forest whose green does not fade even when more than six feet of snow accumulates about them. They are certainly worthy of the great Vanmali's (Krishna's) kindness and love.

These oak-hearted, green-shouldered children of Mahadev are the only companions of Rama. Even Narayan Swami was sent away to the plains not to visit Rama again before *at least* two years. A young man comes every day, cooks food, and leaves to spend the night in some adjoining village—the nearest village being over three miles distant.

Half-a-mile walk up the hill takes Rama to the top of this mountain (Basun) where the sacred glaciers of Kedar, Badri, Sumeroo, Gangotri, Jamnotri, and Kailas are within sight.

The spot is described at length in the Kedar Khand. Such was the place selected for Ashrampada by the author of Yoga Vashishtha. Happily, no town or road is near here yet. Ask not about the ecstasy of Rama. The overflowing rapturous peace will be revealed by Rama's chief work which will go down to the plains for publication some years hence. Let none visit Rama till then, please . . .

God is the only reality.

Here follows an Urdu poem which translated runs thus:

If during the night,
I saw not the Beloved,
Of what use to me is the light of my eyes,
The dead is lying in his grave then,
Of what meaning is the green grass planted on his tomb?

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What matters what people say about me, good or
 bad,
When I have risen above my body, I have no concern with the favours and frowns!
Virtue and Vice, good and evil both were to me
 the rungs of the Ladder to Him,
Burn the ladder now, I do not desire to come down
 from here.
The blind of heart love aught but God,
In the Mecca of heart to have another,
What need I have of fealty to another.
O world! I have given unto thee what was thine
Now, go! I have no need of thee, not even a distant
 courtesy,
I dance with God,
I have no need of modesty or restraint!

* * * * *

Vain is life (other than of absorption in God); be not
 the worm of the grave,
This body is a grave, this self is superstition, blow
 them up, pray!

Your Prayag Kumbh lecture was just masterly. One copy was presented by Rama to the Maharaj of Tehri. Dear, listen, Vedanta is no cant, and this world is naught. He perishes who feels it to be real. God is the only reality. Yes, yes, yes, yes, OM.

RAMA.

(Copy of letter sent to Rai Bahadur Baij Nath)

OM

Vashishtha Ashram,

End of June, 1906.

When viewed from the standpoint of God-Self, the whole world becomes an effusion of beauty, an expression of joy, out-pouring of bliss. When limitation of vision is overcome, there remains nothing ugly for us. "The whole world is Fair and Beautiful." The powers

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of nature become actually our hands and feet or other senses.

As Self is Ananda and is the All, therefore *Self-realisation* means *Realisation of my own Self* as *Supreme Bliss crystallised into the whole world.*

The Universe, being an embodiment of my own Self, is sweetness incarnate. What shall I blame? What shall I criticise?

O Joy! It is all I. OM.

* * * * *

The spiritual Law about privations and success, how beautiful the Veda enunciates it: Let any body in his heart of heart *believe in anything whatsoever as real*—, *i.e.*, fit object of trust—and inevitably he must be forsaken or betrayed by that object. This is a law more stern than the Law of Gravitation. The only Reality Atman brings home to us the delusion of seeing anything else as real.

No wonder at the gate
Can keep the *Gnani* in;
But like the Sun o'er all
He will the castle win,
And shine along the wall.
He waits, as waits the sky,
Until the clouds go by,
Yet shines serenely on
With an eternal day,
Alike when they are gone,
And when they stay.

So long as *any sort of desire* clings to a person, he cannot realise bliss.

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CHAPTER XVII

THE PROBLEM OF HIS COUNTRY: HIS THOUGHTS ON INDIA

AFTER his return from America, he spoke and wrote constantly, till the very day of his sudden death, on the Indian problems of all kinds—religious, social and political—and inspired his country-men with a new outlook on their duties as citizens of India. In fact, he expanded his ideas on "The Secret of Success,"[1] into many books.

Of all philosophic systems in the world, that of Vedanta as Swami Rama, or before him, Swami Vivekananda preached it, leads in its full realisation, more to internationalism, than to nationalism, for nationalism is only an expanded personal love or attachment for the land we live in. This springs from a deep-laden hunger in man for a good, honest life of activity and not of trance or of the trans-senses. But the genius of Swami Vivekananda and of Swami Rama did quite successfully cast the philosophy under the name of "Practical Vedanta" or "Applied

[1] A lecture which is reproduced in this book for easy reference, as it contains some of his fundamental ideas, expressed in the shy, virgin English of a Punjabi graduate who had just acquired it. Its simple diction is fragrant and forceful. (See pp. 130—138 *ante.*)

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Vedanta" into a veritable gospel of patriotism. And though a philosophy of patriotism has been successfully constructed out of the old materials, yet it falls flat on the dreamy Indian people, and this Vedanta fails to inspire them for the uplift of India on those grounds, however true they may be in their theoretical bearings. Better than these two geniuses, the gospel of National duty so brilliantly extracted out of Krishna's Bhagavad-Gita by the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and also by Arobindo Ghosh is calculated to provide a real philosophic basis to the thinking Indians for changing their creed of *Other-worldliness* into This-worldliness.

But nothing avails. Patriotism or the affectionate attachment for one's property in the shape of his country, cannot be generated by any philosophising. It comes naturally, it cannot be forced in by thinking. In certain climes and under the driving force of certain traditions, it is as natural a feeling in the human breast, as the love of a brother for his sister. The passionate love of woman, the chivalrous spirit of protecting her and the home which consists of the woman and the child, even at the cost of life, the love of death in times of an invader's invasion of the aggregate of these homes—called one's country—the complete and perfect refusal to accept the life of slavery, to meet death and downfall rather than loss of liberty and love, in short, infinite worship of woman, land and life as it is, as we find it, and as we live it as good, well-behaved gentle animals—such are the elements in human consciousness which go to make

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up the healthy feeling of patriotism. For monks to get up and preach patriotism, without the passionate love for a sweet home, without the deep attachment to woman as mother and sweetheart and without the spirit of sacrifice for her sake both in labour and in love, in peace and in war, how can healthy love for the country be ever produced, in spite of a thousand interpretations of the philosophy of Karma by Vivekananda, Rama, Arobindo and Tilak.

In India, for centuries, there has been an element of disgust in the Indian consciousness for woman as she is supposed to retard the spiritual progress of an individual soul, and the life of the forests away from her is considered, however erroneously, to be more conducive to the culture of Yoga, concentration and Samadhi. Even Arobindo gives up his girl-bride finally for what the Indian genius fancifully calls "Yoga," which, as far as we know, has been of little use to India herself. The total disappearance of a typical Yogi from this benighted country, as painted in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras,* and the resulting self-degradation of the very quality of the Indian mind due to the morbid practices of Yoga, is, in itself, an illustration of India's inability to keep to Patanjali's type. Where, from times immemorial, a morbid emphasis is laid on the mortification of the senses, and the noble attachment with one's land and bullock and kine—a veritable poetic passion with the composers of the Vedas—has been declared to be a form of *Avidya*, ignorance, where lifeless intellectual subtlety is worshipped, where life in its simple and

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beautiful vitality of the senses is forever condemned and belittled in the eyes of these workless, taskless, unfortunate dwellers of India, the task taken up by the two Swamis, and the torturing of the texts into the meanings of Karma and Dharma, into the foolish *philosophy of duty* of the West, almost taken out of its great spiritual setting in the old Hindu scriptures, is truly neither here nor there.

A happy home cannot spring from such great minds as that of Yagnavalkya who marries more than one wife and getting disgusted of home life seeks the forests towards the last part of his earthly life, as if the forests are really more conducive to the Divine than a really happy, God-balanced human home and its sympathetic life in its simplicity of labour and love. One can understand and worship the renunciation of Buddha, but one fails to see how his life-lessons can be to show that Renunciation means expansion of one's love for his own little family, into that of his country and then of the world. Are feelings and then personal feelings so elastic, that by blowing the air of thought into them, we can become selfish lovers of our families and with a little more effort become the unselfish lovers of our country as one family and with a little more, still more unselfish lovers of the whole world. Such exhortations are abortive. It is the development of life itself, and it takes æons to generate a true feeling in a nation.

The charm, however, of this new turn given by these two brilliant monks to the Philosophy of the

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Upanishads, was *felt*, and a forward intellectual impetus was given to many an Indian who takes life always and everywhere in a metaphysical sense.

In this connection, the Swami Rama's famous articles on "Criticism and Universal Love," "The Spirit of Yajna," "To the Youngmen of India," "The Stamped Deed of Progress," "The Cash Religion or Nagd Dharma," and other sundry writings put together and the Essays in English published by Ganesh & Co., of Madras, and others by Swami Narayana, form a thought-provoking contribution to the nation-building literature of modern India. And there is a colour of ectasy in these words. Mark when he tells them to think themselves as India!

He again writes:

> The land of India is my own body. The Comorin is my feet, the Himalayas my head. From my hair flows the Ganges, from my head come the Brahmaputra and the Indus. The Vindhyachalas are girt round my loins. The Coromandel is my left and the Malabar my right leg. I am the whole of India, and its east and west are my arms, and I spread them in a straight line to embrace humanity. I am universal in my love. Ah! such is the posture of my body. It is standing and gazing at infinite space; but my inner spirit is the soul of all. When I walk, I feel it is India walking. When I speak, I feel it is India speaking. When I breathe, I feel it is India breathing. I am India, I am Shankara, I am Shiva. This is the highest realisation of patriotism, and this is Practical Vedanta.

* * * * *

> O Setting Sun, Thou art going to rise in India. Wilt Thou please carry this message of Rama to that land of glory? May these tear drops of love be the morning dew in the fields of India! As a Shaiva worships Shiva, a Vaishnava Vishnu, a Buddhist Buddha, a Christian

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Christ, a Muhammadan Mohamad, with a heart turned into a "Burning Bush" I see and worship *India* in the form of a Shaiva, Vaishnava, Buddhist, Christian, Muhammadan, Parsi, Sikh, Sanyasi, Pariah or any of *Her* children. I adore Thee in all Thy manifestations, Mother India, my Gangaji, my Kali, my Isht Deva, my Shalagram. While talking about worship, says the God who loved to eat the very clay of India: "The difficulty of those whose minds are set on the *unmanifested is greater*; for the path of the *unmanifested* is hard for the embodied to reach." Well, alright, Sweet Krishna, let mine be the path of adoration of that *manifestation divine* of whom it is said: "All his household property consists of a jaded ox, one side of a broken bedstead, an old hatchet, ashes, snakes, and an empty skull." . . . Mere lukewarm approbation or toleration won't do. I want active co-operation from every child of India to spread this dynamic spirit of Nationality. A child can never reach youth except he pass through boyhood. A person can never realise his unity with God, the All, except when unity with the whole nation throbs in every fibre of his frame. Let every son of India stand for service of the whole, seeing that the whole of India is embodied in every son. Almost every town, stream, tree, stone, and animal is personified and sanctified in India. Is it not high time now to deify the entire Motherland and every partial manifestation inspire us with devotion to the whole? Through Prana Prathistha, Hindus endow with flesh and blood the effigy of Durga. Is it not worth while to call forth the inherent glory and evoke fire and life in the more real Durga of Mother India? Let us put our *hearts* together, the heads and hands will naturally unite.

* * * * *

To realise God, have the Sanyasa spirit, *i.e.*, entire renunciation of self-interest, making the little self absolutely at one with the great self of Mother India. To realise God or Bliss, have the Brahmin spirit dedicating your intellect to thoughts for the advancement of the nation. To realise Bliss, you have to possess the Kshatriya spirit, readiness to lay down your life for the

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country at every second. To realise God, you must have true Vaishya spirit, holding your property only in trust for the nation. But to realise Bliss and Rama in That world or This, and to give a living concrete objective reality to your abstract subjective Dharma, you have to work this Sanyasa spirit, Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya heroism through your *hands and feet* in the manual labour once relegated to the holy Sudras. The Sanyasi spirit must be wedded to the Pariah hands. This is the only way to-day. Wake up, wake up!

Even the foreign countries through their practice teach to-day this Dharma to our India, the only Brahman land in the world.

When a Japanese youth refuses enlistment in the army on the ground of his obligations to his mother (domestic Dharma), the mother commits suicide, sacrifices the lower (domestic) Dharma for the higher (national) Dharma.

What heroic deeds could compare with the sacrifice of personal, domestic and social Dharma for the sake of the National Dharma on the part of that Ideal Guru of Glory, Gobind Singh?

People hanker after power. What an infinite power can you not find at your command when your Self stands in unity with the Self of the whole Nation? In conclusion, let me illustrate this spirit in the beautiful words of the Prophet of Islam:

"If the Sun stand on my right hand and the moon on my left, ordering me to return back, I could not obey." OM! OM!

... The B.A. or M.A. Degrees you receive from the University; but between being a coward and a hero you have to choose yourselves. Say, which position is your choice? That of an abject slave or the prince of life? Strong and pure life is the lever of History, Newton's second Law of Motion characterises Force as effecting a *change* in the motion of the body on which it acts. For centuries and centuries, unnatural antipathies

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and worse still apathies have been running uniformly on the tracks of custom and superstition in our land. It is for you, youths of culture and character, to be the living force to change the wasteful momentums now no longer required. Overcome the old inertia, turn the direction of motion where needed, add to the acceleration where necessary, after the moving mass where advisable. Work on, work on. Mould and adapt the Past to the Present and boldly launch your pure and strong Present in the race of the Future . . .

. . . An average Indian home is typical of the state of the whole nation; very slender means and not only multiplying mouths to feed but also slavishly to incur undue expenses in meaningless and cruel ceremonies! Even animals in the same stable must fight to death with each other when the fodder suffices for one or two only and their number is legion. Not to remove the bone of contention and preach peace to the people is mockery of preaching. My countrymen are meek and peaceful at heart. The heart is willing no doubt, but how can they help jealousies and selfishness when the weakness of the flesh is forced upon them by the necessity of the case. If the population problem is to be left unsolved, all talk about national unity and mutual amity will remain a Utopian chimera. We have to solve the riddle of this Sphinx or we die. *Sympathy* and *selfishness*, according to biological principles, cannot grow under such general social environments where pain and suffering is daily displayed by our associates. With such *populous poverty* around you, Indians, it is hoping against hope to develop sympathy and love. Students of physics know that a mass of matter, of whatever kind, maintains its internal equilibrium so long as its component particles severally stand toward their neighbours in equidistant positions, so that each molecule may perform its rhythmic movement without disturbing those around. Now, what about the mass of India? Can its individual units perform their rhythmic movements without clashing with others, have they scope enough for free natural movement? If for one that eats, ten must starve, you have to take immediate measures to make the national

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equilibrium more secure. Otherwise, the only hope for India lies in the grim *caresses* of wild Nature, which for extreme cases like ours, have been enumerated by the Maharishi Vashishthaji as Pestilence, Famine, Destructive war, and Earthquakes! Enough now of the evil.

* * * * *

There was a time for Aryan colonists in India when it was a blessing to have large progeny. But those times are gone, the tables are turned, and in view of the overcrowded population, it has become a curse to have a large family . . . Let us sweep out from the country the most pernicious principle which has practically been swaying us so long: Marry, multiply in ignorance, live, and in bondage die . . .

Youngmen, stop it! stop it! Ye youths, responsible for the future of India, stop it. In the name of morality, in the name of India, for your own sakes and for the sake of your descendants, pray stop *indiscriminate, ill-timed, blind* marriages in the country. That will purify the people and solve to some extent the population problem.

* * * * *

Reviewing the past History of India we find, as in the case of any other country, the ultimate internal cause of India's night to be no other than Exclusivism. "How glorious is the broad daylight in this room (India)! Oh! it is mine—mine! Let it belong to me alone." So saying, we practically pulled down the curtains, shut the doors, closed the windows; and in the very attempt to monopolise the light of Ind created darkness. God is no respecter of persons, nor is fortune geographical. . . .

* * * * *

In short, Yajna implies realising in active practice my neighbour to be my own self, feeling myself as one or identical with all, losing my little self to become the self of all. This is the crucifixion of selfishness, and

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this is resurrection of the All Self. One aspect of it is usually styled Bhakti and the other is called Jnana.

O ALL (OM !)—

Take my life and let it be
Humbly offered, All, to Thee.
Take my hands and let them be
Working, serving Thee, yea ! Thee.
Take my heart and let it be
Full saturated, Lord, with Thee.
Take my eyes and let them be
Intoxicated, God, with Thee,
Take this mind and let it be
All day long a shrine for Thee.

This dedication being thoroughly accomplished, one realises the blissful significance of Tat-tvam-asi (" That Thou art ").

* * * * *

Through the arched door
Of eyebrows I pour,
And sit in the heaven of heart
There well do I ride
In glory, and guide,
And no one can leave me and part.

Merry wedlock, union,
On earth or in heaven,
Is a dim foreshadowing symbol
Of my perfect embrace

Of the whole human race,
And my clasp so firm and nimble.

As the golden lance,
Of the sun's sharp glance,
I pierce the hearts of flowers.
As the silvery ray,
Of the full moon gay,
I hook up the sea to my bowers.

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O Lightning! O Light!
O thought, quick and bright!
Come, let us run a race.
    Avaunt! Avaunt! Fly! Fly!
    But you can't
With me even keep pace.

O Earth and Waters,
My sons and daughters!
    O Flora and fauna!
All limitations flinging
Break forth into singing
    Hosanna! Hosanna!

OM! OM! OM!

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE PROBLEM OF HIS COUNTRY

(Continued)

IN his early writings in *Aliph*, we do find a passion concealed in his reverie for the uplift of his country from slave-mentality, by his method of self-realisation of that supreme ecstatic state of inspiration, and most probably, this passion suddenly crept into his consciousness by his personal contact with Swami Vivekananda at Lahore, as his whole mind from the early beginnings of his life was developing towards Transcendentalism steeped in the lyrical, passionate poetry of Persia and the Punjab, which he had modified as a practical religion for himself to live by, by the influence of the English literature both on Art and Science, for right in the middle of his reverie, we find him suddenly and almost irrelevantly thinking of liberty of his mother country India! He hated slavery of man, he thought it is God in him that is trodden thus under foot. He considered it the greatest crime and in *Aliph* it is this pure passion that we find in the form of a subtle kind of suggestion for Indians to uplift themselves.

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We have then seen how he worked for India in the United States of America, condemning both the exploiting nature of British rule as in his speech—"Appeal to Americans,"—and the caste system in other speeches, in which he made strong appeals for its abolition by American help. It is strange, that in America, the chief plank of his programme was the abolition of caste system, and on his return to India, the chief theme became not "Untouchability" or the raising of the depressed classes, but the philosophy of the nation-building and patriotism and co-ordinating the different forces at work in the task of nation-building. As he told me, it was V. G. Joshi of Poona who drove Rama to appeal for India and work for India, in America. Similarly, it was the missionary American consciousness against the Indian caste system, that drove him to speak against caste as an unmitigated evil responsible for the enslavement of a whole country, for, to a man with nationalism as his profession, the slums of America and Europe give food for thought, and after all, caste-ridden India had not at any time in its history produced the misery of the slums, though unfortunately the very slums are also artificially being created now by the incoming tyranny of the factory life. Even men like Pratap Chandra Muzumdar had put in a defence for the caste system in America, while they came and condemned it in their own country.

On his return, we find him taking up the educated Indian and correcting his outlook on national

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questions, and trying to create a literature for the union of various men and groups of men, their sects and schisms in the love of their country. Strange but true, he talked so beautifully on married life in America, and took up the stale subjects of Brahmacharya or celibacy again when he returned to India. The old century-long preaching of the philosophy of *Atman* in one form or another, succeeded in taking out all springs of action and love and labour from the Indian mind, and, at best, made it a store-house of empty rattles of metaphysical terms and phrases, intermingled here and there by the morbid sentimentalism of human emotion in reaction against this intellectual dryness. Where sitting like a bankrupted banker, the Indian does but count again and again his empty ledger pages and hear their empty rustle, to such as he patriotism is taught now again as a religion! Religion is a torment for this slave of India, for he neither can give it up nor understand it. Art, handicraft, creative labour, silent work, the task of life is not given him, only talk, discussion, intellectual differences, slavery and death. They say the alien rule has been the cause of the nation's downfall, but they do not see the causes of the alien rule coming in at all. Why has not alien rule penetrated into the regions of the North Western Frontier, why has it not gone to Afghanistan yet? Why not into Siberia? Surely those people are not intellectually superior to the inhabitants of India. Even the docile deer refuses to be caught alive; if you put her into slavery she

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dies. The lion and the tiger must be met and shot in the forests, you cannot break them into slavery. The wise statesmen of England with their eyes fixed on the sensed realities of life, have given to the educated Indians of to-day the semblance of democratic forms of Government, Legislative Assemblies *ad infinitum* to indulge to their heart's content in intellectual jingle and talk and foam at the mouth to exhaustion, as is their wont now from centuries of their glorious culture of inaction. There are newspapers, conferences, congresses, all talking in utter delirium for such is the wont of these people. From the platforms of the abstruse Jain and the Hindu discussions, they have come to this and they shall talk. But these rank theological talks led in the past to the relinquishment of all creative labour and love, serious application to the tasks of life, bee-like habits of silent, continuous work and industry, and to the loosening of the organic structure of the old pre-Upanishadic Aryan society which loved the home, the neighbour, its cattle and fields, and hated the enemy. The backbone of the people was thus broken, it is still broken, and the body-politic of the slaves of India is thinking of freedom by mere act of *willing*, as the pigeon shuts his eyes and *wills* that the cat should not eat it, while he shuts his eyes under hypnotic spell of the cat. Nor prayers nor wishes, nor wills of such people can be heard, who do not take to silent industrious continuous work, hard labour, art and handicraft. He who finds his life-work is free, no one can enslave him. The slave

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nations have to utilise their masters and learn to work in silence, day and night, and leave them behind, like the tortoise and the hare, in the famous fable. Neither colour, nor vantage ground, nor present superiority would count, if the slaves work and excel their masters in their performance. Without material strength developed in man and gathered at his back, to dream of the liberation of a large group of men is as ridiculous as the debate of schoolboys in a class-room or of a few talk-intoxicated rats to bell the cat! To dream of a passive or active revolution in India is to invite unorganised anarchy which would hurt India more than anything else, though it is possible that that very anarchy might eradicate certain fundamentally fallacious notions from the Indian mind and put some life-giving, hard facts into its possession. All other things will stand undetermined as to the future of the slave, so long as he does not take to creative labour. A creator is forever free. To weave one yard of cloth with our own hand, to beat a ploughshare and to make a shoe must be exalted above a thousand speeches on patriotism, on the Hindu-Moslem unity, and the eradication of the caste system and the uplift of the depressed classes and all that kind of empty talk. It is incessant creative labour that will fix the faces of these different people, now fighting with each other, down to their work, so much so that they will have no leisure to talk on their religion to any one but to themselves. Their differences and feuds and castes will disappear only in their

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incessant labour and when they become thoroughly engrossed in their life of joyous work.

The problem of India is not easy of an early solution. It is not an All-India problem as these patriots make it to be. The task should be to cut up India into very very small units according to classes and castes and provinces and put them to work. Co-ordination in labour, co-operation in joint creation would lead to a united political whole. Unless this is done and the different congeries of men, according to their religious and social bias, put to work, India would not be free from the British yoke and though perchance it became free through anarchy the Afghan will soon be on its neck. A nation of intellectualists who have forced their meta-physical phrases and words and philosophic codes deep into the heart of the poor peasant and his wife, and have tried for all this time to deprive man of the settled enjoyment of life as it is, does not, after so much destructive work, deserve to be free in so short a time.

These itinerant monks jingling their old rhymes and worn out slogans of the past still separate man from man, they do not teach religion, but rotten algebraic forms of some dead, old musty thoughts. Swami Rama wrote against them, with his experiences of the modern methods of work.

This academic sort of work of preaching religion goes on in Europe too, but there nothing grows so well as the life of creative labour, of scientific, artistic work, with its human enjoyments. Where the weeds

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once begin to grow as in India, and where even the sowing of weeds goes on apace, Religion becomes itself a poison. Too much knowing becomes sin, as it takes away the beauty of ignorance that one finds in active sympathetic home life of the animal man.

The Indian masses labouring in the fields, working in abject poverty, unassisted by the State or their own people, are still living in the sixth century A.D., and the two per cent of educated people not in the twentieth but in the twenty-ninth century A.D., so far as their imagined ideals are concerned, with all the great gulfs of the accumulated capital and the accumulated mental power between the two. Is it not ludicrous that efforts are being made to tear this huge, gigantic, unmoving mass of life from its old tradition, habit, thought and prejudice, by passing resolutions and by condemnation of the foreign rule, with Japan as one example of such metamorphosis before them. But Japan has not a single man breathing in the country, who was not and is not fit for incessant creative labour. There, the religious wrangles are hushed in the sacredness of the artistic labour of centuries, there the noises of mind are hushed into the sweet harmony of life, which only silent work done for centuries can create. And then the sea around them makes a great difference between India and Japan. The children of the soil remain only breeding insects, the children of the sea become gods, for they play upon the bosom of the Infinite and with the dangers of the unknown.

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A voice has risen in India and that of Mahatma Gandhi, to go to the masses, to renounce the fruits of modern education, to take the old traditional work of simple labour and love. But the metaphysical temperament of the country has cast this message also into political terms, instead of social, and there it is already broken into pieces like fragile glass, for it is not given to the masses, it is taken up by a portion of the lifeless "educated" people of India and they shall fight over it, till all the milk of truth is *spilt*! As I have said, nothing can now germinate here in weeds, only weeds shall grow! It is refreshing to find at least about this one man no humbug, but a potent candour of truth in its perfect simplicity. His message of Non-co-operation is the ancient Bikhshuism applied to political problems. It was, is and shall be the religion of only the few saintly and noble characters like himself. It is war reduced to self-sacrifice on an unlimited scale. His infinite impatience for the freedom of the down-trodden slaves of the whole world wishes to compress the evolution of a whole race in a single day. But his vision is fixed on the final simplicity of a perfectly freed home-life of man, with equal rights of peace and princeship! All differences of black and white dissolved for ever in the inner freedom of the whole human race.

Weave one yard of cloth a day, beat a sword, paint a picture, make an earthen pot, or tan a piece of raw hide into leather, plough and sow and tend your fields, rear a sheep, do any of these things

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and turn your back forever on congress and conferences, and boycott the Government. Let them govern you as they choose. Think not of India, think of supporting yourself and your family on your own hard labour, think not of factories and mills for they must be dismantled even in the West as they constitute a veritable alien Government in even self-governing countries. Do not start where Europe is finishing and returning home with empty hands. Think of *man* and not of *machine*, and then live well in a sweet home loving your wife and child, knowing them more, loving them more than your metaphysical Parmatman and Atman, and your Allah which however real to a Mohammad, is, in fact, nothing but a superstition for you, and concentrate yourself in building a sweet home life in silence and in peace, in joy of your own sacred work. It means really going back to the old village life, it means going back to the plough, away from the desire of sitting on thrones !.

I do think that some such is the divine message to the tired world, and unless it is taken up, no change of government can bring in to any people the true self-government where a divine co-operative life can be secured from the humblest to the highest with an equal peace and princeship of his sweet home, with an equal peace and princeship of his own tilling of the soil, with an equal peace and princeship of rearing his children in the atmosphere of freedom of a true citizenship. But all such moral development needs the self-protection of a military power, otherwise it

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cannot live long in the environment that revels to destroy such moral organisations and replace them by non-moral society based on the rights of might alone. Even in the past, no religion could breathe without a sword in hand, and this too comes as New Religion and needs its own sword, otherwise the winds would blow it away and dry up its seeds!

I present below a few quotations from Swami Rama's writings on the subject:

Says an American writer:

> I've thought and thought on men and things,
> As my uncle used to say,
> "If the folks don't work as they pray, by links,
> Why, there ain't no use to pray."
> If you want something and just dead set,
> A-pleading for it with both eyes wet,
> And tears won't bring it; why, you try sweat,
> As my uncle used to say.

The power of safe and accurate response to external conditions is the essential feature of sanity. The inability to adapt action to need is a characteristic of insanity. "Change or Perish" is the grim watchword of Nature. Keep pace with the advancing times and you can survive in the Struggle of Life. (India take note.)

INDIA

A person can never realise his unity with God, the All, except when unity with the whole Nation throbs in every fibre of his frame.

Instead of pouring the precious ghee into the mouth of artificial fire, why not offer even hard crusts of dry bread to the gastric fire which is eating up the flesh and bones of millions of starving but living Narayanas?

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The highest gift you can confer on a man is to offer him knowledge. You may feed a man to-day, he will be just as hungry to-morrow, teach him an art and you enable him to earn his living all his life.

Half the population is dying of starvation, the other half is buried under conspicuous waste, superfluous furniture, scent bottles, affectations, galvanised manners, all sorts of precious trifles, squalid riches and unhealthy show.

The Indian Princes and the Indian Nobles, having lost all their precious jewels and power, are left mere carpet knights with hollow rattling titles and vain empty names.

There are some for whom patriotism means constant brooding over the vanished glories of the past. Bankrupted bankers pouring over the long out-dated credit books now useless.

Young would-be Reformer! decry not the ancient customs and spirituality of India. By introducing a fresh element of discord, the Indian people cannot reach Unity.

Abnegating the little ego and having thus become one with the whole country, feel anything and your country will feel with you; march, your country will follow.

Service and love, and not mandates and compulsion, is the atmosphere for growth.

The man who is worthy of being a leader of men will never complain of the stupidity of his helpers, of

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the faithlessness of his followers, of the ingratitude of mankind, nor of the non-appreciation of the public.

A country is strengthened not by great men with small views, but by small men with great views.

Perfect democracy, equality, throwing off the load of external authority, casting aside the vain accumulative spirit, throwing over-board all prerogatives, the spurning of the airs of superiority and shaking off the embarrassment of inferiority, is Vedanta on the material plane.

Let every man have equal liberty to find his own level. Head as high as you please, but feet always on the common ground, never upon any body's shoulders or neck, even though he be weak or willing.

Pseudo-politicians think of bringing about national rise without striking the key-note of power, *i.e.*, the spirit of freedom and love.

The rise of Europe and America is not due to Christ's personality. The right cause is Vedanta practised unconsciously. The downfall of India is due to Vedanta being absent in practice.

To be saved from foreign politics the only remedy is to live the Law of spiritual health—the Law of love for your neighbour.

All that we have to arouse among the Hindu people is a spirit of appreciation and not criticism, the sentiment of fraternity, the instinct of synthesis, the coordination of functions and aristocracy of labour.

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Assert your individuality against all society and all nations and everything.

When you want to settle matters through reasoning and logic, while the glass partitions of caste-feeling and race-feeling do not let the hearts unite, you come in proximity of danger.

Religious sectarianism has clouded manhood in the people and eclipsed the sense of common nationality.

Those that you miscall *fallen* have *not risen* yet. They are the freshmen of the University just as you also were at one time.

Beloved orthodox people of India ! put into force the Shastras aright, the Dharma of the country demands of you to relax the most stringent caste-rules and to subordinate the sharp class-distinctions to the national fellow-feeling.

If you are not willing and ready to assimilate the New Light, which is also the old, old light of your own land, go and live in *Pitri Loka* with the forefathers. Why tarry here ? Good-bye !

As it is to-day the Swamis and Pandits in India are singing lullabies to prolong the lethargic sleep of their race.

Independent thinking is looked upon (in India) a heresy, nay as the worst crime. Whatever comes from the dead language is sacred.

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A child turned Christian, although the very own flesh and blood of a Hindu father becomes more a stranger than the street dog.

Truth-consciousness brings strength and victory. *Skin-consciousness* (even if it be *Brahman-consciousness* or *Sannyasa-consciousness*) makes a cobbler of you.

A woman is given the position of an inanimate object in civilised society whereas a man is free in his ways and a woman is kept bound hand and foot. She becomes the property of one man, then of another man.

It is a great blemish on the face of civilised society that woman is made a mercantile commodity and woman is possessed and made to belong to man in the same sense as a tree or a house or money belongs to him.

Neglecting the education of women, children, and the labouring classes is like cutting down the very branches that are supporting us, nay, it is like striking a death-blow at the very foot of the tree of nationality.

What aches the head, bends the back, or chokes the chest? It is walking on the head instead of on the feet. Let your feet be on the *earth* and your head in air (filled with heavenly joy); invert not the divine ordinance, put not the earth on your heads, and call it sane living, take not the appearance more seriously than the divine (real) self.

Havan ceremony forms a most important and necessary feature of *Yajna* as ordinarily understood. The most common argument on the lips of some of its present-day votaries is: "*Havan* purifies the air and it produces fragrant perfumes." That is very far-fetched.

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The perfumes, delicious to smell like all other stimulants or "white lies of physiology," exhilarate for the moment entailing a depression of spirits for reaction. Stimulants may help to borrow from our future store of energy, but they borrow always at compound interest and never repay the loan.

Rama tells you, what your scriptures say about the Gods becoming visible on the occasions of Yajna ceremonies is indeed literary true. But that simply proves the power of *collective concentration*. The latest researches of psychology show that the effect of concentration increases as the square of the number of one-minded people present on the occasion. That is the virtue of *Sat Sang*.

An effective method of creating love and union among the masses and especially women and children (and hence the future generations) is *Nagar Kirtha* singing and dancing processions or pageant shows passing through streets fearlessly proclaiming the Truth.

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CHAPTER XIX

HIS POETIC SPIRIT: A LITTLE COLLECTION OF HIS POEMS

MR. C. F. ANDREWS, in his Introduction to the collection of his writings and speeches[1] says:

> He would undoubtedly have altered much and possible abbreviated much. He would have corrected also the metrical forms of his poems, which have clearly been put down on paper as the inspiration to write came to him, without any laboured correction. But while there is considerable loss to the reader on this account, there is also considerable gain, for what is lost in finish and correctness is gained in freshness and vitality . . . The readers will gladly make allowance for repetition and lack of finish, when the individuality of the Swami himself is brought so vividly before them by his manuscript notes.
>
> * * * * *
>
> This mention of his poems leads me on to the last feature of his life and writings which I would wish to mention. I do so with considerable diffidence as it is quite possible that others may take a different view to my own. But what I would venture to say is briefly this, that I find in Swami Rama Tirath's poetic spirit, which lies behind his philosophy, the highest value of his written work. In this seems to be its freshness, its

[1] In Woods of God-Realisation, published by Swami Rama Tirath Publication League, Lucknow, 4 vols.

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originality, its contribution to the world of thought. His romantic love of nature, strong in his life as in his death, his passion for sacrifice and renunciation, his eager thirst for reality and self-abandonment in search of Truth, his joy and laughter of the soul in the victory he had won ;—all these and other qualities, such as these which make him break out into song reveal the true poet behind the philosopher.

Again says Mr. Andrews:

" . . . My whole heart goes out to the writer in his beautiful passages on renunciation as the Law of Life Eternal; or again in his intense and vivid appreciation of beauty in nature; or again, to mention only one more instance, in his ideal of married life. I experience in a measure the same sympathy when I read some of the poetry of the Upanishads or certain passages from that greatest of all Hindu poems—Bhagavad-Gita. There also the note is struck which is heard many times in Swami Rama's writings, that only in the unruffled silence of the soul can the divine harmony of the universe be heard.

Writing on the unconscious approximation of the East in poets like Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats and of the West in true Easterns like Swami Vivekananda, Swami Rama and in poets like Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, amongst others, he concludes:

From the side of the East, there is the approach made towards the West in what both Swami Vivekananda and Swami Rama Tirath have called by the title of "Practical Vedanta," the approximation, that is to say, of the modern Advaita Vedanta to the spirit of Christian philanthropy in its social and national applications. Here again the approach may well have its limits and the social and national development of the East under the new Hindu impulse may differ both in kind and in degree from that of Europe under the Christian training of nearly 2,000 years.

* * * * *

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It is because Swami Rama Tirath was so singularly fitted to make some of these advances towards approximation, and to interpret Indian thought to the West, that I hold this series of lectures to be of value to my own countrymen.

As regards his poems, Mr. C. F. Andrews says:

It (the happiness within him) is this also which bubbles over his poems waking in others an echo of his own laughter. The outward setting of these poems, as I have already said, may often be crude and even grotesque, but the inner spirit may be caught by the sympathetic reader beneath the imperfect vehicle of expression.

In India, he wrote poetry in Urdu, on his return from America, he started again in Urdu, in imitation of the free verse of Walt Whitman. It is in America, that perhaps he had to give vent to his feelings in English. As Mr. Andrews says the setting is crude and grotesque, but when I, as a young and new monk, received his poems for the first time, in Tokyo, I, who did not know any defect in the form of his poems then, drank them literally as draughts of sunlight, for then I was *en rapport* with his inner spirit whose chords they came and touched and vibrated. The underlying spirit of these poems is "in solution," and not yet crystallised into a definite form of expression. Some of his poems were put to music and were sung to the assemblies before he got up and addressed them.

As I have said elsewhere, he confounded all ownerships of authors, and sometimes, sang other people's poetry as his own, without mentioning

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the names of the original composers. His originality in poetry was of his own joy and feeling and not of the forms. He took up any one's violin and began smiting its chords.

His spirit of poetry is best caught in his letters, given at various places in this book, then by the "violins" belonging to other people, as seen in his collection of couplets given elsewhere, and then by his own poems, of which a few I give below and, on the whole, it pervaded as the music of emotion the published American addresses which he gave *extempore* and had no time to revise for the press. It is difficult to disentangle his spirit from this prose which he did not write but spoke out, and as Mr. Andrews says, their highest value lies in the poetic spirit behind them. This poetic spirit is modified, intellectualised and made heavy in his written articles on Indian subjects—political, social, theological—on his return from America. I at least sadly miss in the latter that light and bubbling form of his previous utterances and songs in *Aliph* and also in his American speeches and poems.

The following poem was put to music in America:

(1)

Within the temple of my heart,
The Light of love its glory sheds,
Despite the seeming prickly thorns,
The flower of love free fragrance spreads,
Perennial springs of bubbling joy
With radiant, sparkling splendour flow.

* * * * *

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Free birds of golden plumage sing
Blithe songs of joy and praise,
Sweet children of the blushing spring
Deep notes of welcome raise;
The roseate hues of nascent morn
The meadows, lakes and hills adorn,
The nimbus of perpetual grace
Cool showers of nectar softly rains!
The rainbow arch of charming colours
With smiles the vast horizon paints.

(2)

The world I saw, studied and learnt.—
This primer well did me describe,
Its letters were hieroglyphic toys,
In different ways did me describe,
This alphabet so curious one day,
I relegate to the waste-paper basket.
I burn this booklet leaf by leaf,
To light my lonely smoking pipe!
I smoke and blow it through my mouth,
And watch the curly smoke go out.

RAMA,
SO AM I.

O CIVILISATION

Civilisation, vagrant dream!
Respecting names and forms that seem;
Thou raisest a foolish dust of show,
Thyself in darkness dost not know;
You climb a hill to comb the hair,
You murder Self to cherish care.
To please the public, win esteem,
You sacrilege the Self supreme.

You pander to the taste of slaves,
Blind slaves of fashion, honoured knaves,
To aping custom you conform,
Convention, artificial form.

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At every step is "Will it pay?"
And fear, "What will people say?"
How timid, tiny, reed-like, frail,
At every turn but turning pale!

O measles, itching-fever, sad,
Of nations, running masses mad;
Thy baneful ways and habits vain
Forego, be sane, be sane, be sane.

TO THE SO-CALLED CIVILISED

Ye magnetised to laziness,
Of weakness and deceit a mess;
Punctilious, touchy, hot and red,
Like swollen sore with gathered head.

Bewildered hordes, befoundered millions,
All, at the mercy of opinions,
Why Majesty of Self ye spurn,
From clothes nobility ye earn?

Like pendulum ye oscillate,
On transient trifles to dilate,
By wan appearance ruled away
With iron hand, despotic sway.

Trade interests displace your love,
And Mammon shoots the sacred Dove.
Not free to laugh, not free to weep,
Not free to love, nor free to sleep.

Ah! sheaths of sham and masks of shame
And breathless awe of name and fame!
Your health is illth and goods are bad;
Improper property keeps you sad.

In clothes as coffins, homes as graves,
Ye bury Self, then wail and rave,
Ye spare the husks and soil the Soul,
To save a part, ye lose the whole.

Possessed ye are by your possessions,
Oppressed by hitting hard suggestions,
O living dull in two dimensions,
Prosaic embarrassment and tensions.

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Wake up, wake up, awake!
Tear off the veil, your slumbers shake!
O Gods of Worlds, O Lords of hosts,
Why dance attendance on the ghosts?

Cast off the shadows of desires,
Shine out the Suns and Stars and Fires!
Toll, toll the knell of care and clinging,
Hear Angels, Hallelujahs singing.

To property no deference,
Dissolved every difference,
No jealousy, no fear,
I am the dearest of the dear.

All the secrets so clear!
One to Me far and near.
I stretch in Infinity,
Sinks in Me all affinity.
I am Life, I am manna!
Hosanna! Hosanna!

As the Sun dims the stars,
Beating drum drowns guitars,
As the sea eats up streams,
Wakeful mood sweeps up dreams.

Pure Love drinks up fear,
So do I wash up clear.
Pain, envy, and weakness.
Death, vanity, and meekness,
Earth, Phoebus, Diana.
Hosanna! Hosanna!

O Earths and waters,
My sons and daughters,
O flora and fauna!
All limitations flinging
Break forth into singing,
Hosanna! Hosanna!

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ONENESS WITH ALL

Through the arched door
Of eyebrows I pour
And sit in the heaven of heart ;
There well do I ride
In glory and guide,
And no one can leave Me and part.

All men and ma'ams
Sleep in my arms,
In me they rest and walk ;
I strike the chords,
They utter the words
Through me, in me they talk.

Merry wedlock, union,
On earth or in heaven
Is a dim foreshadowing symbol
Of my perfect embrace,
Of the whole human race
And my clasp so firm and nimble.

As the golden lance
Of the Sun's sharp glance,
I pierce the hearts of flowers.
As the silv'ry ray
Of the full Moon gay
I hook up the sea to my bowers.

As the balmy air of the morning fair
I kiss the rose to bloom ;
In a wild, wild dream
Like a zigzag stream
I bear the world in my womb.

O Lightning ! O Light !
O Thought quick and bright !
Come, let us run a race ;
Avaunt ! Avaunt !
Fly, Fly, but you can't
With Me ever keep pace.

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O Elements, Storms!
O Thundering forms!
I stretch my arms around
Ye harnessed to my car
Drive wide and far
On, on and round and round.

I laugh and laugh,
At Destiny scoff,
I thrill creations aura.
My Ocean of Wonder
Breaks forth in thunder.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

MOONLIGHT[1]

From the mountain high
You peer and pry,
Mark well my lonely chamber.
As a maiden shy
All round you spy
So that no one be by
With a face as pale as amber.

Though coy and cold
Yet making very bold
You steal up blushing red
Through the window door
On the carpet floor
Then upto my very bed.

There bending low
You kiss my brow
And kiss my eyes to wake;
Thy radiant touch,
Thy whispering glare,
Unclouded bare,
Sweet breath, are such
My sleep away they take.

[1] This poem was written at midnight, as the moonlight crept up into Rama's cottage at Shasta Springs.

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Yourself and I
Together we lie,
For a while we lie together,
Round me you twine,
I drink your wine
Till each is lost in the other.

I CANNOT SUPPRESS A LAUGHTER

A fearful, terrible shock was felt;
Unnerved, affrighted was the frame;
And lo! the cause which cruelly dealt
Was flickering, trembling, shadow tame;
The shadow of *Doubt* upsets the Master,
I cannot suppress a laughter.

A dog to snatch a piece of meat
From his reflected image in lake,
Of *real* meat, himself did cheat.
Why Real Joy for fun forsake?
O! what a mock disaster!
I cannot suppress a laughter.

The journey ends and reached is goal;
The long and weary toil is o'er:
For this the universe did roll.
Now, suns and stars their greetings pour,
As sheep attend the pastor:
I cannot suppress a laughter.

In harmony with Power and Love,
In tune with Infinite Lord of all,
At one with Omnipresent Soul,
In union with heavenly call,
At peace with equal, high, and low,
Seeing Self above, below.

O, what a peace and bliss and joy!
The whole of nature I enjoy;
I sing the music of the spheres,
Cut capers in the dance of stars,

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In seas I leap and shout forth cheers,
My noisy games are clamorous wars;
Oh Joy! How fast am I, and faster!
I can't suppress a laughter.

Why blush and quake, O rising Sun!
I won't slap red thy cheeks and chide:
Come, Nature, come, my wee sweet child,
My flesh and blood, O darling son!
Come to my arms, dissolving one!
Than me there's nothing softer,
I can't suppress a laughter.

I cannot love, for Love I am.
Oh! What shall I desire or crave?
The heart of everything I am,
Instead of wish I gladness have.
All objects I enjoy as Me,
Light, life I give to all that be,
Of every boat I am the wafter,
I can't suppress a laughter.

TRANSCENDENTALISM

When blooms the maiden's rosy cheek,
The bee like lover's eyes seek
Sweet nectar from that rose;
The charm is mine in this and those.

I freeze in dazzling diamond snows;
Fond burning heart, with me it glows.
I'll tell you that thou needst not vex
At seeing Nature so complex;
Your riddles, Nature, solve in me,
Just marry me, dissolve in me.

Nay, don't say so, splendid Lord,
You are already Master, God
Of each and all in every station
Of all the Forces of creation;
And thou art Nature, laws and worlds
Thou far transcendest thought and words.

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O ye afflicted with suspicion!
O ye possessed of superstition!
O ye that suffer pain and sorrow!
O ye pining for the promised morrow!

O ye bereaved of dear and near!
O ye whose intellect is not clear!
Why tantalise yourself in vain?
Fish, suffering thirst in ocean main?

In you the highest Heaven lies,
Your mind to outer objects flies!
Turn inward, know the Self supreme,
No more shall maladies be seen.

Ye realise the inner Ram
O! What a soothing myrrh and balm!
O! What a demon-caster!
I cannot suppress a laughter.

The foam as terra firma ta'en
    Brings floundering in the bog
The false apparent self abused
    As real lands in wretchedness.

Affections, feelings, cravings, wishes
Would seek me, reach me, cling to me,
And fain would bur-like stick to me,
But when my Real Self is seen,
They vanish like the dark in Sun,
Are cast away, as drops of spray
By birds of downy wings,
Unsullied before and after.
I can't suppress a laughter.

In Unaffected Witness Light
    For sentiments no quarters,
I look them in the face and die
    These curious poor martyrs.

The local consciousness of self,
Congestion of the vein of self,
This vortex, ego is dissolved
And all the shapes and forms are mine.

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Ah ! Foolish knack, with misery fraught
That places personal selves behind
The bodies and forms of foes and friends !

This knack entangles, pinches, smarts,
This isolating habit's gone,
Imputes no personal motives Rama.

The bodies are numerous, Soul is one,
That Soul supreme is none but I.

I am the worker, witness, judge,
The snarling critic, applauder.

Free, free is every one to me
No bondage, limit, fault I see.

Free, free am I and others free.
God, God I am and you and he.

No debt, no duty, fraud or fear,
I am the One, the Now, the Here.

The final source of passions all,
The cause of feeling's rise and fall ;
The Home of beauty, heart of love,
The soul of eagle, peacock, dove ;

The inmost centre of desire,
The pulling force of every wire ;

That which reveals as gravitation,
The real source of all causation
Am I.

In everything my breath I feel,
In earth and moon and sun I reel,

I blow in air and grow in grass,
I flow in rivers, throw in mass.

The present, absent, near and far,
The past and future, flower, star ;

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Bewitching eyes, enchanting song,
Expressions fascinating, strong ;

Sweet silv'ry words and honeyed lips,
The silken locks and dalliant grips,

As Me and Mine I enjoy
O Joy ! O Joy ! O Joy !

Than thought my dominion vaster
I cannot suppress a laughter.

OM ! OM ! OM !

O happy, happy, happy Ram !
Serene and peaceful, tranquil, calm.
My joy can nothing, nothing mar,
My course can nothing, nothing bar.

My livery wear gods, men, and birds,
My bliss supreme transcendeth words.
Here, there, and everywhere ;
There, where no more a "Where ?"

Now, ever, anon and then ;
Then, when's no more a "When ?"
This, that and which and what ;
That, that's above a "What ?"

First, last and mid and high,
The One beyond a "Why ?"
One, five and hundred, All,
Transcending number, one and all.

The subject, object, knowledge, sight ;
E'en that description is not right.
Was, is, and e'er shall be,
Confounder of the verb "to be".
The sweetest Self, the truest Me,
No Me, no Thee, no He.

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INFINITY

The Infinite is that, the Infinite is this ;
And on and on, unchanged is Infinite.
Goes out the Infinite from the Infinite
And there remains unchanged the Infinite.

The outward loss betrays the Infinite,
The seeming gain displays the Infinite.
The going, coming, subtracting, adding
Are seeming modes and truth the Infinite,

O, what a charm marvellous spreads,
Over every hill and dale,
Wond'rous blue and green my beds
Charming every red and pale.

Glorious, glorious light it sheds
Over every storm and hail,
Beauteous, beauteous one and all.
Heavenly, heavenly blessed call.

BRIMFUL IS MY CUP OF JOY

Oh ! brimful is my cup of joy,
    Fulfilled completely all desires ;
Sweet morning zephyrs I employ,
    'Tis I in bloom their kiss admires.
The rainbow colours are my attires ;
    My errands run light, lightning, fires.
All over I am, all sweethearts I,
    I am desires, emotions I.
The smiles of rose, the pearls of dew,
The golden threads so fresh, so new,
    Of Sun's bright rays embalmed in sweetness.
    The silvery moon, delicious neatness,
The playful ripples, waving trees,
Entwining creepers, humming bees,
    Are my expression, my balmy breath
    My respiration in life and death.
All ill and good, and bitter and sweet,
In that my throbbing pulse doth beat.

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What shall I do, or where remove ?
I fill all space, no room to move.
Shall I suspect or I desire ?
All time is me, all force my fire.
Can I be doubt or sorrow-stricken ?
No, I am verily all causation.
All time is now, all distance here,
All problem solved, solution clear.
No selfish aim, no tie, no bond,
To me do each and all respond.
Impersonal Lord of foe and friend,
To me doth every object bend.

RAMA.

THE SELF SUPREME

Break, break, break at the feet of thy crag, oh sea,
Break, break, break at my feet, O worlds that be,
O suns and storms, O earthquakes, wars,
Hail, welcome, come, try all your force on me !
Ye nice torpedoes, fire ! my playthings, crack !
O shooting stars, my arrows, fly !
You burning fire ! can you consume ?
O threatening one, you flame from me ;
You flaming sword, you cannon ball,
My energy headlong drives forth thee !
The body dissolved is cast to winds ;
Well doth Infinity me enshrine !
All ears, my ears, all eyes, my eyes ;
All hands, my hands, all minds, my minds !
I swallowed up death, all difference I drank up ;
How sweet and strong a food I find !
No fear, no grief, no hankering pain ;
All, all delight, or sun, or rain !
Ignorance, darkness, quaked and quivered,
Trembled, shivered, vanished forever ;
My dazzling light did parch and scorch it,
Joy ineffable ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !

Roll on, ye suns and stars, roll on,
Ye motes in dazzling Light of lights,
In me, the Sun of suns, roll on.

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O, orbs and globes mere eddies, waves,
In me the surging oceans wide
Do rise and fall, vibrate, roll on.

O worlds, my planets, spindles, turn;
Expose me all your parts and sides,
And dancing, bask in light of life.

A LULLABY

I

Sleep, baby, sleep.
No sobs, no cries, ne'er weep.
Rest undisturbed, all fears fling,
To praise Thee all the angels sing.
Arbiter of riches, beauty and gifts,
Thy innocent *Atma* governs and lifts.

II

Soft roses, silvery dew-drops sweet,
Honey, fragrance, zephyrs, genial heat,
Melodious warbling, notes so dear,
And all that pleases eye or ear,
Come from Thy heavenly, blissful home:
Pure, pure Thou art, untainted Om.
Sleep, baby, sleep, etc.

III

No foes, no fear, no danger, none,
Can touch Thee, O Eternal One!
Sweet, lovely, tender, gentle, calm,
Of sleep Thy Atman doth embalm.
Thyself doth raise the spangled dome
Of starry heavens, O darling Om!
Sleep, baby, sleep, etc.

IV

The sun and moon Thy playing balls,
The rainbow arch bedecks Thy halls,

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The milky ways for Thee to walk,
The clouds, when meet, of Thee they talk ;
The sphere, Thy dolls, sing, dance and roam,
They praise Thee Om, Om Tat Sat Om !
Sleep, baby, sleep, etc.

V

In lilies and violets, lakes and brooks,
How sweet Thy sleeping beauty looks.
Let time and space, the blankets warm,
Roll off Thy face by sleeping arm.
Look half askance as baby lies,
Dear naughty boy with laughing eyes !
Sleep, baby, sleep, etc.

VI

The shrill, sharp echoes of cuckoos
Are whistles, rattles, Thou doth choose.
The sparrows, winds, and all the stars
Are beautiful toys and baby's cars.
The world is but Thy playful dream,
It is in Thee, tho' outside seem.
Sleep, baby, sleep, etc.

VII

O wakeful home of rest and sleep !
O active source of wisdom deep !
O peaceful spring of life and action !
O lovely cause of strife and faction !
To limiting darkness bid adieu !
Adieu ! Adieu ! Adieu ! adieu !
Sleep, baby, sleep, etc.

VIII

The beauteous objects, charming things,
Are flattering sounds of beating wings,
Of Thee, O Eagle blessed King,
Or fleeting shadows of Thy wing,
Bewitching beauty half reveals,
And as a veil it half conceals

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The wearer of this veil, Sweet Om,
The real Self, Om, Tat Sat Om.
Sleep, baby, sleep, etc.

THE LIKENESS OF MY BELOVED

I

Oh ! how could I get my Love's likeness !
Could anything like Him be conceived !
Could He in cameras be received !
Could Artist stand to take His picture ?
Could He appear in colour and figure ?
The camera of form did melt away !
His flood of light was too much, too much,
O how could I get my Love's likeness.

II

I focussed the mind to take His portrait,
Adjusted the eyes to take His portrait,
The camera of heart to take His portrait,
The apparatus all did melt away ;
His flood of light was too much, too much.
O how could I get my Love's likeness ;
Then I'll have him as I could not have his likeness.

III

They say the Sun is but His photo,
They say that man is in His image,
They say He twinkles in the stars,
They say He smiles in fragrant flowers,
They say He sings in nightingales,
They say He breathes in cosmic air,
They say He weeps in raining clouds,
They say He sleeps in winter nights,
They say He runs in prattling streams,
They say He swings in rainbow arches.

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PEACE LIKE A RIVER FLOWS TO ME

Peace like a river flows to me,
Peace as an ocean rolls in me,
Peace like the Ganges flows,
It flows from all my hair and toes,
O fetch me quick my wedding robes.

White robes of light, bright rays of gold,
Slips on, lo ! once for all the veil to fling !
Flow, flow, O wreaths, flow fair and free,
Flow wreaths of tears of joy, flow free,
What glorious aureole, wondrous ring.
O nectar of life ! O magic wine !
To fill my pores of body and mind !
Come fish, come dogs, come all who please,
Come powers of nature, bird and beast.
Drink deep my blood, my flesh to eat.
O come, partake of marriage feast.
I dance, I dance, with glee
In stars, in suns, in oceans free,
In moons and clouds, in winds I dance.
In will, emotions, mind I dance.
I sing, sing, I am symphony,
I'm boundless ocean of Harmony
The subject—which perceives,
The object—thing perceived,
As waves in me they double,
In me the worlds do bubble.

LOVE

Dear little violet, with Thy dewy eye,
Look up and tell me truly,
When no one is nigh,
What Thou art !
The violet answered with a gentle sigh,
If that is to be told when alone,
Then I must sadly own,
You will never know what am I.
For my brothers and sisters are all around
In the air and on the ground,
And they are the same as I.

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CHAPTER XX

CONCLUSIONS: A FEW REFLECTIONS

I. His Monkism

SWAMI RAMA had forced himself into the ochre robe of a Sanyasi. He had an indomitable will and he willed it so. But he was too poetic and too emotional to have been at all comfortable in this garb. At Hardwar, when he fell ill, I was in attendance. He liked me because I was all tears for him, I blew like a soft breeze in and out of his sick room. I loved him, for he was so beautiful, so fascinating and so personal. Every thing was done as he wished. I never said "no" to him. "Yes, sir," "yes, sir," greeted him from my lips. And with half opened mouth and tearful looks I imbibed, in love and veneration, almost unconsciously the lessons of his great life. There was he before me lying ill for about a month, who had toiled day and night to gather with both the hands, the very cheerfulness of God, whose laughter rang round the hills of Hardwar, even when he lay ill with fever.

One day, his wife and his step-mother and his little son hardly of about six years of age came from the Punjab at great personal expense to have his

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Darshanam as he had just returned from America. The whole family was not very well off, as their ablest wage earner had cut himself off from them due to an uncontainable excess of his brilliance itself, and there were they living in the average usual poverty of an Indian family that gets suddenly bereft of its wage earner. It was for the relief of the sheer mental pain of the family caused by his long absence away in America, that they spent all their extra money for a visit to Hardwar. I went and reported their arrival to the Swami who was still lying in bed, though fully recovered of his ailment, yet weak and exhausted. His cheeks, like the temples of an apple, had begun to burn faintly again in their habitual glow, his deep transparent black eyes seemed to be resting like two bees on the blossomed roses. He called for his glasses and I handed them over to him. He cleaned them with his ochre-coloured silk and put them on. And all this while, I believe he was thinking a reply to be given to me, as I had told him that his wife, mother and his little child had arrived.

"Puranji!" as he used to call me, "have you any money with you?" "Yes sir! I have and how much is required; and I can get more," replied I. "Please take them to the Railway Station and get them a return ticket to the Punjab. Let them have their bath in my Ganges and let them return. They cannot see me." I was now for about a month with him with the mute little dumb animal love I had for him. But all the peace in me exploded, as if he

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had lighted a fire. "Good-bye, Swamiji! I too am going and I will never see you again. You! You who ought to have been the mainstay and support of the family snatched yourself away from them. They come spending their own little money and they are nobodies to you. And we the foolish boys and men who come and merely play about you and humour you some way are great things. They are pilgrims who wish to have the glimpses of their Sanyasi. They have not come to lay any claims on you or to reclaim you. If you cannot see them, it is cruel. I cannot live with one who disregards personal relations in so heartless a manner, particularly when they need but a look, a smile and a glance at you and nothing else." Saying this, I took my departure from the room, and I would have left promptly, but I had only half opened the door to get out, when the Swami laughed heartily and called me back and said: "All right! let them come in."

I was abashed in his presence of my unusual heat to no purpose, and they came in by this time. He simply laughed heartily, and received them with his usual smile, but with the serene temper of a monk. The little child said, "Swamiji! May I recite my lessons to you." "Yes! Oh! you have begun to read. How splendid!" he said and listened to his recitation. "Puranji! give him a bunch of grapes" said the Swami, and I lifted it from the mantlepiece and put it in both the upspread hands of the little boy. The grapes were not much satisfaction to him, he wanted what he could no more get. Swami's

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wife stood all the while looking at him and speechless. Not a word passed between them. There was a little lovely talk interspersed with the ringing of Swami's laughter, with the step-mother, and the Swami enquired about every one of his family, and thus closed the interview, and these pilgrims withdrew from the room. I thought how tragic is the association of little minds with the great, and how the relations of one with the other end in pathetic separations while both live breathing the same air and seeing the same sun. They were sent back. It was after full one year when I met Swami again at Vashoon or Vashishtha Ashram, that he said many little sweet things to me when he and I sat alone on a green sward of the Himalayas and I distinctly remember his telling me:

"Puranji! Rama never knew that this ochre garb is not of freedom. Slaves have begun to wear these robes and they have made it so formal, so conventional that Rama feels impatient about it now. When he next goes down to the plains, in a full assembly, he will tear his robe into pieces in public, and announce that the orange robe of the Sanyasi is no more a vehicle of freedom."

"You remember Rama told you to send Rama's family people at Hardwar and you got so enraged. Rama too has a heart, but that time he thought of obeying the laws of the robe he was wearing. It was a formal refusal on his part to see them. How can man forget his personal relations, when emotion still stirs in his breast, be it for God or for man?

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The poets cannot be petrified into unfeeling stones. Spiritual development does not mean insensateness. They killed Keats by harsh words only. The greater the development, the greater the feeling."

"How divine was the face of Brahmananda's[1] mother. She looked transfigured that day. Did she not?"

"Rama is glad you have married. After all, a married life is a much stabler one. You both could come and live on these Himalayan tops."

From a humble, pure, poor student, he rose into a full statured man, roseate with the dawn of cosmic consciousness in him, and a man of deep concentration, wonderful vivacity, irrepressible laughter, bubbling with joy, lofty in his visions, light and racy in his gait. He rose up mad, fully drunk with divine wine, his face aglow with the divine fire, his eyes closed, his lips parted in a loud scream, and a cry leaping forth in the air on the bank of the Ravi, his arms fully spread, quivering with passion, his bosom heaving, his tears streaming! The very trees vibrated with him, the breezes played with him, the stones talked to him! He went almost senseless to the Oriental College as the reader of mathematics, and he knew not where his body was. In the Mission College, he would address every student of his class, "O Krishna, Beloved! You know everything; what is it that I am to teach you." If a boy pleaded ignorance, he would repeat "O Krishna, Beloved! You know all." He would thus inspire the boy

[1] The name of Swami's youngest son.

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with the solution of the problem, who would come and then do it on the black board with ease. From the Mission College, this mad young man of Lahore went to the Oriental College still teaching, but his condition had grown worse. His ailment was becoming incurable.

One day, he went and stood before Dr. Ewing, the Principal of the Lahore Mission College and said "You! You worship Christ! Have you seen Him with your eyes. No! you have not seen him. Look! Look! Ewing ! ! Christ is standing before you." Thus the madness was complete.

In those days, those that met him in the Lahore streets felt a strange fascination for him. Self-concentrated, self-absorbed, vibrating with the sound of 'OM,' he went through the streets and the very pavement thrilled under his tread. "Say you are God, go on the top of the house at the dead of night and proclaim 'I am God'—O man! get up and rise and say 'I am God,'" he used to preach. It was the loud pitch and the piercing tone on which this new rising man emphasised and wished his admirers to proclaim, "I am God." Any good thing, any beautiful thing he saw, any heroic action he heard about, any bold deed or thought when reported to him elicited from him the remark "Ah! This is Vedanta." Vedanta was a word that spelt everything noble, beautiful, spiritual and glorious in human history. It was no philosophy to him, it was all poetry.

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Dr. Mohammad Iqbal of Lahore told me: "One day he had colic and I visited him at his house, and cramp after cramp came curling his thin, bony body into circles and semi-circles, and evidently the pain was excruciating, but I saw him ringing with laughter. His room was filled with joy. 'O Iqbal! what should Rama feel when one of his million bodies is ill? I laugh and laugh, and illness has fallen to the share of this body and the laughter to my soul.'"

"His mind was evolving exactly as I thought," continued Iqbal, "and inspite of all his renunciations I knew he would come back one day and live as a simple householder."

It is then I told Iqbal the little talk I had with Swami at Vashoon, which interested him much. Swami was a mind, a soul, a dynamic personality, not a dead mental principle or vow of any kind.

Whether he would have actually reverted to the life of a householder or not, I cannot say, but I do find that in America and on his return from there, he was more or less disgusted with the so-called Monkism and admired the life of a married man. Kamalananda, his Amerian lady disciple, who stayed with me for about six months under the same roof at Dehra Dun, told me that in America, Swami Rama, many a time, expressed a desire of making his own home in a country like America. He talked against the caste system, and dwelt at length on the goodness of married life. While on his return to India, he eschewed it again, and took up the stale subject

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of celibacy. The former I believe was due to his free intercourse on terms of intimate comradeship with the freed women of America. In America, he idealised the woman. And a poetic nature like his always needs vitally this idealisation. But at the same time I am not denying that his preaching in America about the sanctity of marital life may be due to Swami Rama's feeling that the West stood in need of the lesson. It is a pity he lost touch with the sweetness of the company of women, otherwise the story of his life would have been more lyrical than ascetic.

Dr. Iqbal also told me that there was much sorry comment on Swami Rama's resignation of his post as a professor. In mad, burning words he wrote that the King Rama could no more be a servant of any one but of the King. The foolish senators talked that he had gone insane, but Iqbal, then a young professor, rebutted their remarks saying if Tirath Rama was mad, then there was very little sense left elsewhere. It was the madness of Spinoza, it was the poetry of a prophet.

II. His Sadness

When I met him in Japan, I found his personality was infectious. He was, so to say, absorbable by a devotee. He could impart elevation of his own consciousness to the willing seeker if the latter came *en rapport* with him. It happened in my case, I had learnt no books on Vedanta and Hindu Philosophy.

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I did not take notes of what he said and digested them. I think, in my rapture of meeting him, I did not even hear his spoken words, as others did in Japan. But I imbibed the whole of his bliss and thought by direct touch of his consciousness with my consciousness. It was more or less, a subjective kind of training in a moment.

So was it in the case of at least one other, and the story was related to me personally by Mrs. Wellman of America. His fire flew to others and many a bosom stole the flame from his burning self. But as I met him at Muttra, Pushkar, Hardwar, Vashishtha Ashram in India on his return, that subtle volatile essence of the personality of a Faqir (a living mystic) had already vanished, and Swami Rama had begun handling himself and the world with the great powers of his well-trained intellect. He was casting new ladders to go up. The high inspired ecstatic state, the volatile *Avêsh*, had gone and the brilliance of thought took its place. He himself felt it very acutely as I see it now, he betook to solitudes again and again to recover. Here did happen, what he himself, by his critical readings of the Bible, thought had happened for some days in the life of Christ himself. At Vashishtha Ashram, he sent away his disciple Swami Narayan and lived in utter solitude, his kitchen also was about two miles away from himself. He tried all those methods that he used to emphasise, but the inspiration had almost spent itself in efforts to do something. The people of the Tilak school influenced his work towards politics

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and there was he exhausted! His resorting to the Darjeeling forests was also in this struggle but after his return from the Darjeeling forests, when he met me, he said: "Rama had gone into deep and high Yogic Samadhi, and there in the *Nirsankalpa Samadhi* came the *Sankalpa*—'Let India be free—*India shall be free*.' All political workers will work as mere tools of Rama, they are my hands and feet. Rama is the back-ground." However interesting this *Sankalpa* of Swami Rama, yet it tells plainly how much less had he become from what he was, after his return from America. Even in Samadhi, he thought of India. It was not so when I met him in Japan. Impressionable as he was, on the whole, a Faqir was lost in a spiritual-minded patriot, an ecstatic life was exhausted in thoughts of preaching his ecstasy and through ecstasy the politics of India to the world. As he was unworldly by temperament and by inspiration, certainly he was the last person to be used as a tool for petty political ends.

He told me once: "Rama did not like to stray out into any other subject, for it ill became him. But Mr. V. G. Joshi of Poona who acted as his secretary, at San Francisco, for some time, goaded Rama to *do something* for India." Thus did he give me a little bit of his mind, how the Tilak school of thought enlisted him. His "Appeal to Americans" and his adding India to his programme of work in America, is the weakest thing he ever attempted, it was an after-thought and certainly not his own. When the Americans wished him to lead the organisation in

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America in aid of the Indian students, he again washed his hands clean by refusing to take up the working of the financial side, refusing to touch any gold, and the scheme had to fall through ; for how could Americans continue any living interest in his scheme for long, without him.

His keen disappointment at Benares when Pundits told him that he knew no Sanskrit, and his taking to the study of Sanskrit at that late hour of the day, was a symptom of this self-exhaustion. Because a mere glance askance from him would have surely disconcerted the "dead" Pundits and scholars of a hundred Benareses if he had been the ecstasy-filled monk as I saw him at Tokyo. But one word from these Pundits of Benares killed him, this is sufficient to show the self-loss he had suffered by preaching his own personal ecstasy to the world around. The world is "dead" to the life of the spirit, and the living ones come and touch it, revive a few, but in exchange die themselves. Even Shankaracharya had to pay for his *Digvijaya* (the victory) over this world full of dead carcases.

"Who has touched me, my power is gone," the powerful Christ too had to say. This is inexorable truth, and they who live in God know this to their cost.

Swami Rama in his talks gave us long accounts of how God-consciousness is subject to rise and fall, and Christ was his famous example. Of all persons, he as an accomplished mathematician and a faqir, ought to have known and I now believe that he did

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know, what self-exhaustion of his own God-consciousness meant.

Swami Rama made frantic efforts to regain himself, but it seems, the philosopher in him overpowered the faqir in him, and he died searching for the rose that had just perfumed him so wildly. It is a pity, he knew no living faqir of God-consciousness greater than himself, but there were saints who could help him subjectively, only if he had the chance of meeting them, or a wish of acknowledging their spiritual help.

All those who went to him in his last solitudes were young men like myself, understanding little about the rise and fall of the self-consciousness of a faqir,—a mystic—who were mostly led away by him into a dumb adoration, doing what he asked us to do and chanting without much understanding "*I am God*," "*I am God*,"—*Shivoham*! *Shivoham*—and who were of no use to him whatever in rejuvenating him. Swami Narayan, his disciple, knew him as a man too, and he would actually take courage to argue with him, that his physical ailments were at the bottom of his depression, and he would actually "tease" him by his persistent logic in those days at Vashishtha Ashram. Neither to him, nor to me, could he disclose his inner struggle. But a devoted disciple and a life-long companion like Narayan knew better, and did, at times, go against him, and criticise him even harshly, out of his love. He felt teased as a flower might feel annoyed by the hum of the bee around it. I myself saw Narayan

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almost taunting Swami Rama when he suddenly postponed his going to *Poali Kanta*, when he, Swami Narayan, myself and others had actually resolved to go up to *Buddha Kedar* glaciers. This would never have been possible in the earlier days. I am also a witness of their talk at Tokyo when Swami Rama apparently, heartlessly asked him to leave him and go touring in the world by himself. No entreaties of mine to take Swami Narayan with him to America were of any avail. Great was the disappointment of Swami Narayan, but he accepted the orders as those of God and bowed and kissed and left him. The apparent difference between him and Swami Narayan was due to the latter's keen, though unconscious disappointment in love, seeing his physical health giving way. It was love's excess anxiety which led to bitterness.

I might say here that the life-long devotion of Swami Narayan to Swami Rama, his preparedness if need be to lose his very life for Swami Rama, is an achievement by itself, and its continuousness and consistency is enough to make of it almost a religion of Swami Narayan, but there is no denying the fact that Swami Narayan with fresh knowledge of a new system of medicine did not spare Swami Rama at Vashishtha Ashram, when he argued that the former confused his physical ailment of chronic dyspepsia with the divine absorption. Swami Narayan was correct in his diagnosis, that Swami Rama was not physically up to the mark, but this itself was due to

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the loss of the old inner ecstacy. What we, mere boys, thought to be the height of God-absorption, was after all the lassitude of the spirit due to physical ailments which Swami Narayan attended to and wished to cure, but he was rendered helpless, as Swami Rama would order him to live fifteen miles away from him and come only when called.

Alas! it is a pity that he had no friend of his spirit, who could prop up his God-consciousness when he felt exhausted, and we, of course, could not command his confidence, for of what use were we all to him?

In conclusion, I must say that the short meteoric life of Swami Rama—of only thirty-three summers—is again a tragic tale of the sufferings of the great when they take upon themselves the task of lifting up the world, the dead world by actual exchange of their bliss with its sorrow and suffering. It is the tale of one more crucification for the good of the world. A thousand Tilaks and Gandhis work for the world, and feel still greater joy in doing more, because there does not take place between them and the world the great exchange which made even Christ cry out—"Who has touched me?" Such people are not spiritual in the sense in which Christ and Chaitanya were, they are not yet *Faqirs* with divine *Avesh*, they are not yet in direct line and touch with the prophets of the world! Otherwise, one lecture ought to be enough to keep them indoors on bed for at least a fortnight. For living man to come out to save humanity means *crucification*, not so much

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physical and mental, as *spiritual,* it may mean the complete death if he has not the powerful hands in the Invisible to lift him up. The torch which Swami Rama took up in his hand was extinguished long before its actual and apparent extinction in the waters of the Billing Ganga where he was drowned!

As he used to say, such great beings of the inspiration of ecstasy in them, should sit calm in themselves. Their very presence uplifts the world, they need no *doing*. They need but *living*, but *burning*, but *being*, but *breathing the Breath of God*. Otherwise, there is suffering for them, for no one can heal a sick person, without taking his sickness upon himself. Swami Rama died the death of Joan of Arc. It was a saint crucified for the sake of his great missionary zeal. Whether it was self-inflicted, or whether he was goaded to it by others, it is very pathetic, that he failed to find a society of living faqirs with whom he could share the depression he collected by contact with the world. For such as he, the subjective atmosphere of God-consciousness is as essential as water for fish. He died having cut himself from the Sat Sang of his own levels, otherwise men like him burn with eternal youth even in old age!

III. His Example

Swami Rama stands out of the whole educated India, as one man who dared so much to win God and won Him, who entered life as a conquerer enters a conquered city, who trampled in dust under his

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feet the lower self, and identified himself with God, and who, in his own life, proved that Brahma Vidya when self-realised leads to freedom, that the solution of all the world-problems lies in every one of us attaining to the grand heights of Self-Realisation. That a short slender Brahman boy of the Punjab, in these days, before our very eyes, demonstrated in his personality, the great type of men that wrote the Upanishads and sang Vedic hymns, is truly a miracle of devotion, self-conquest, and a marvel of will-power developed by intense emotion and hard mental labour.

His life is full of many lessons. He comes to the student as the type of a student—better buy books and the oil for thy midnight lamp, than an extra loaf of bread, or an extra shirt to wear. Success is not so joy-giving as the struggle to succeed. To pass examinations is not the real object, the real object of a student is to put in hard labour in planting well the garden of his mind, his labour to be harder than that of a farmer, a miner, a poor common labourer. Such is the life of a true student. There is no sense-enjoyment for him but that which comes to him after working the whole night on a problem of mathematics. He can never do enough. Sleep too is an intruder, time is too short and there is much to do!

All his life, he was a student. Man has to be a student and a pupil all his life.

To the dutiful son, he comes as a dutiful son. Forego your own comforts and offer all of them to your parents, how can they be angry? Parents too

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need from you total self-sacrifice. Give all theirs back to them and give all what is God's to Him.

To the disciple, he comes as a disciple. His letters written in his student days have a continuousness of the disciple's emotion that forms the major portion of his culture. He never forgets kindness, this too is like the disciple. At Sialkot, he borrows ten rupees from a man, and he feels he can never repay it, and he shows his inability to repay his kindness adequately by offering many instalments of the same ten rupees over and over again to him. It seems Swami Rama, in the burst of his inspiration, forgot that, as he was a student all his life, he had to be a disciple too all his life, and it is there that he missed the pleasure of meeting the mystics of an equally great life.

To the teacher, he comes as a teacher full of affection for his student. He takes his pupil as his God Krishna. He teaches him with reverence, with apologies. He knows his God knows everything, it is His pleasure that He has asked him to teach. His reverence for the child of man is infinite. He calls him God. *That thou art*, *Tatvamasi*.

To the citizens, he comes as a citizen. And he has only one thing to say "Raise yourself, elevate yourself, be free by attaining to your inner manhood, give up the cringing attitude of the ignorant slaves, be the master of yourself, stand on your infinite self-respect, be fearless, be full of love :

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small"

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He raises a transcendental conception of civic duty before his fellowmen. " The Secret of Success " was an address which he was fond of repeating everywhere in his scheme of making good citizens in this world. And to the enslaved Indians, apart from his visions and reveries, he is an example, how a poor Punjabi student can educate himself against odds, inner and outer, and raise the reputation of his country in the estimation of the world by striking the world with his self-less character, with its radiance of a strange vitality and power, and with its fragrance of an all-embracing love that made such a man as he, a welcome guest in all homes.

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APPENDIX

Opinions of the American Press

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[" The Oregonian," Sunday, December 2, 1906, written by W. H. Galvani.]

SWAMI RAM, HINDOO MONK AND PATRIOT, DROWNED IN GANGES

PORTLAND, Dec. 1.—About three years ago there came to this city a young Hindoo monk, whose name and fame was known all over the Land of the Vedas. Swami Ram Tirath, on his arrival here, had not as yet completed his 27th year, and, in order to go abroad to plead the cause of ancient India, he gave up the position of professor of mathematics in the government university at Punjab, which he had held for a number of years.

As a Sannyasi patriot of unsurpassable renunciation, the young high priest of India became convinced that there can be no change in the deplorable condition in the land of the Aryas unless the Brahmanical contrivance, known as the caste system, is forever swept away. To this end he devoted his life. Earnest, as he was brilliant, zealous as he was eloquent, Rama's work in the United States found many sincere sympathizers. Indeed, he endeared himself to all who knew him, and among his many warm friends from the Pacific to the Atlantic may be found some of the best known educators, jurists, scientists, as well as men well known in the business world.

After his tour through the United States Rama returned to India, where he settled for a few months in Darjeeling district, and soon retired altogether into the inaccessible fastnesses of the Himalayas.

It was on October 18 that Rama accidentally met his death by drowning in the Ganges, State of Garhwal, or Tehri. The Lucknow Advocate of October 21 and 28, just received, as well as private letters, give some details of Rama's death. He was evidently in a state of "samadhi," or profound religious meditation, while bathing in the sacred river of ancient India, when he found himself in a violent current of the stream, with which he was unable to cope. His body was recovered on Friday afternoon, October 19, when the Vedic funeral ceremony was performed—the courts having closed for the day, and the entire province in mourning.

"Swami Ram Tirath's death," says the Lucknow Advocate, "is a great loss not only to the cause of Vedanta, but to the cause of general progress of the country, and it is surely difficult to find another selfless Sannyasi to take his place and to carry out the work of his life. . . . The loss of Swami Ram Tirath is a national loss."

Here in Portland the friends of the late Hindoo reformer and philosopher will meet to-morrow evening at 8 o'clock at the residence of Mrs. O. N. Denny, 375 Sixteenth Street, corner of Montgomery, where a brief memorial service will be held. All members of the Swami Ram Society and friends of Rama are requested to attend.

W. H. G.

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[From a Minneapolis Paper—"Minneapolis Tribune".]

WOULD SAVE COUNTRYMEN

SWAMI RAM PLANS THE REDEMPTION OF THE IGNORANT MASSES IN INDIA

AMERICAN EDUCATION

HE WOULD HAVE THEM COME HERE, AS DID THE YOUNG JAPANESE

"IN India we have no such spectacles as this," remarked Swami Ram, the noted high caste Hindu, at the university this morning as he indicated the audience which was composed nearly half of girls.

The Swami, who is visiting in this country to secure aid in promoting a plan for the redemption of the ignorant masses of India, spoke to the university students who crowded chapel hall to hear him. He painted a stirring picture of the destitute condition of India.

"The people," he said, "are dying every year by the millions. It is the ultimate result of their own ignorance and superstition. The caste system is at the bottom of much of the trouble. The lower caste cannot tread the same highways as the upper class. They are not admitted to the universities. Even the upper class is not well off. A college graduate receives $20 a month or less, and is then expected to support his family of from twenty to forty persons.

"The American missionaries are doing a great work, but they are strangers in a strange land. The high caste classes will have nothing to do with them. They cannot reach the women nor the children. All they can help is a few of the lower classes. The British government is doing all it can to enlighten the people, but it cannot destroy the caste system nor effectively raise the women from abject slavery.

"All reforms come from within. My plan for the freedom of the people of India is something like the Japanese plan of half a century ago. The young men of Japan came to American colleges. They learned here and went back to teach their people American ingenuity, vigor, ability and the spirit of equality. The country has had a marvellous development since then.

"The Japanese were handicapped more than the Hindus would be. They did not know English, while every college boy in India is fairly well acquainted with the language. The Indian boys are all right in heart and mind, but they lack hand culture. They are superstition ridden.

"A little help from America would change this. If they could come here they would breathe the spirit of earnestness and energy. They would acquire the helpful arts and would go back as the most inspired missionaries to teach their own people."

The Swami has already outlined his plan in many universities and colleges throughout the United States and met with fair success. Several societies have been formed for the purpose of aiding the work, and a number of scholarships have already been formed for the benefit of Indian students. A committee in India is to pick out the most deserving students who are too poor to come to America alone, and it is to aid these that the Swami is working.

He will address a meeting at the university chapel next Tuesday afternoon at 4 o'clock.

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[From an American Paper.]

HEAR HINDOO PHILOSOPHY

SWAMI RAM DISCUSSES FORMS OF SELF IN UNITARIAN CHURCH

AN audience which taxed the capacity of the Unitarian Church gathered yesterday morning to hear Swami Ram, the poet-philosopher of India, lecture on "Expansion of Self". The Swami's idea and lines of thought were put in such a simple and forceful style that he commanded the closest attention and deep interest. To illustrate the expansion of self, the Swami commenced by drawing four circles, one within the other, having a common horizontal tangent at the top. These circles were shown to represent the four grades of moral and religious life, viz., mineral, plant, animal, man and God-life in human form. Self-centred, sensuous people were pathetically shown to be no more than minerals in human form. Rather humorously Nero, Tiberius and other Caesars were represented as precious minerals, but not men, their life and activity being comparable only to the moving equilibrium or dead motion of a spindle. People of a wider circle of love, embracing their families, centering all their activities in domestic life, were proved to be plant-men in human form. They might be flowers, fruit, trees, oaks and cedars in the form of man, but to the dignity of man they could not lay a valid claim. Yet their existence was proved to be just as necessary in the economy of nature as that of plants in the physical world.

Next the animals in the human garb were treated, who have expanded their self and identified themselves with the sect, creed or community which they represent. Their circle includes many small circles of the first and second kind. But it was pointed out that just as a husk may be useful for the development of the seed for a time, after a period it becomes the choking prison to the seed, so sectarianism is all right in so far as it helps our growth, but becomes a destructive element when it shuts out the broad light outside its walls.

Man-life in the human dress was dwelt upon. People whose orbit of activity focusses round the good of the whole nation, whose self has expanded into the self of the country, without regard to class, color or creed, were represented as real men in the body of man.

Lastly, the God-man was depicted, whose self has expanded into the self of the world, and from whom love flows toward each and all as naturally as light radiates from the sun. This is the Christman, the man of nations, the man of ages, the universal man.

Swami Ram will be heard in Temple Beth Israel on December 16 and next Friday afternoon will accept an invitation to address the Woman's Club.

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["The Denver Times," Monday Evening, January 21, 1907.]

BODY OF SAOMI RAM CONSIGNED TO THE GANGES

NEW THOUGHT TEACHER HAD CLASSES IN DENVER

THE body of the great Saomi Ram is no more. With Oriental ceremonies and services impressive and solemn, the body of the great Hindu who strived to wipe out caste has been consigned to the sacred Ganges river. The followers of the Oriental genius who live in Denver and the West have just learned of this tragedy, which took place October 17. Saomi Ram was a new thought teacher, and, while in Denver, in January, 1904, he was received in the churches and made several addresses here, finally winning many persons to his new creed and religion. In the eyes of his followers Saomi Ram is not dead; his body simply has ceased to exist.

Mrs. Florence J. Kramer of Denver was among those who found much wisdom and justice in the teachings of Saomi Ram, and she has just received a letter from Editor Puran of the official organ of the cult, Thundering Dawn, published in Japan, which merely mentions the passing of Saomi Ram. Editor Puran is writing a book about the leader, and wants the clippings of newspaper stories written about him when he was a visitor in Denver, hence his letter to Mrs. Kramer.

In the passing of Saomi Ram India loses one of its greatest benefactors, for he was putting forth all his energies to abolish caste, which he said, was the curse of India.

"Educate twenty young Hindu men in your great American universities and they can break up the caste system in India," he said while in Denver. He wrote for magazines and newspapers and wrote many books, for Saomi Ram was well versed in the English language, and literary people will receive news of his death with sorrow. His following in the West has grown to large proportions, too.

"The Common Path" is what he called the new religion, and its object was to regulate the conduct of the present life, like this.

To minimize the waste of energy.

To abolish wear and tear of the body and mind.

To obtain freedom from dissipation, due to envy, vanity, distemper and the blues.

His was the religion of nature.

"Did you ever hear of rivers which were Hindus' and not Christians'? So do I make no distinction of class, color or creed in greeting as my co-religionists the rays of the sun, the beams of the stars, the leaves of the trees, the blades of grass, the grains of sand and the hearts of tigers, elephants, lambs, ants, men, women and children," said Saomi Ram while expounding his new thought in Denver. "My religion is the religion without a nickname. It is the religion of nature."

While in Denver Saomi Ram established classes for the study of his religion and acquired a large following, which is greatly shocked at the news that "his body is no more".

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[From an American Paper.]

SWAMI RAM AS TEACHER

WILL EXPOUND HIS PHILOSOPHY TO PORTLAND AUDIENCES

SWAMI RAM, the Indian philosopher, who has delighted several Portland audiences during the last week by his religious teachings, has decided to give every one interested an opportunity to become further acquainted with his philosophy by giving a course of six classes. A preliminary meeting will be held to-day at which the dates will be arranged. The classes will be held at the house of Mrs. O. N. Denny, at 375 Sixteenth Street, and the general subject will be " Regeneration is the Realization of God ". The following six ways of coming to this realization will be explained in the lessons: through action, love, knowledge or law, fearlessness, purity and yoga, an Indian term for which the nearest English equivalent is contemplation or concentration.

Next Sunday Swami Ram will occupy the pulpit in the Unitarian Church. On that occasion he will speak on " Expansion of Self". The ministers of Portland have treated Swami Ram with courtesy and he is anxious to show his appreciation.

He has had several pleasant experiences since he has been here, not the least of which was his reception by the Bishop Scott boys, before whom he lectured yesterday. They applauded him again and again, and when their principal told them that Swami Ram and he were born in the same part of India, they gave him the school yell as a particular compliment.

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Judge Chas. B. Bellinger, President
Judge L. R. Webster, 1st V. President
William H. Galvani, Secretary.
Mrs O. N. Denny, 2d V. President
A. C. Going, Treasurer

Oregon Society for the Emancipation of India from Caste Slavery

Membership Open to All
Annual Dues One Dollar
No Assessments

Secretary's Address
The Oregonian Building
Portland, Oregon

THE object of the Society is fully explained in its name. It is International and Non-Sectarian. It recognizes the fact that in this Twentieth Century there exists an untold number of people who are, to all intents and purposes, slaves; and that they live in their bondage of ignorance right under the shadow of modern civilization. That these people, descendants of a race which led in Ancient Wisdom and Enlightenment, should be brought back to something of the pristine glory of their ancestors by EDUCATION, and this blot of their subjugation be removed from our civilization, are the objects of the society.

To all who have the common cause of humanity at heart, we appeal for co-operation and assistance. EDUCATION is our aim, and we believe that by imparting practical knowledge, under the spirit of our free institutions, to the young men and women of India, we secure them Emancipation.

Our plan of work is simple: We wish to enlist members from all parts of the state, who will unite with us in establishing and maintaining scholarships for the fittest young men and women, selected or approved by the general committee of that country; and also to co-operate with similar societies working for the cause of India.

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